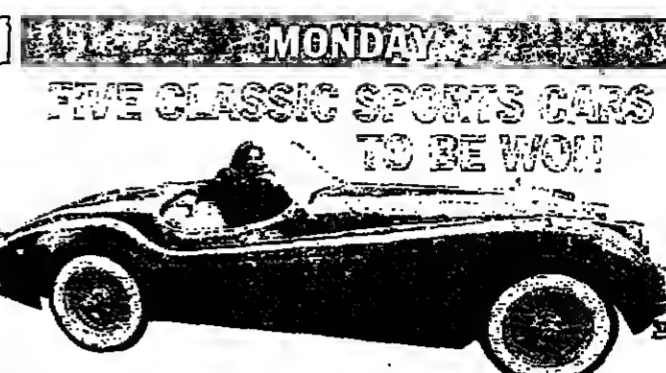




TODAY RUNCIE, ROYALTY AND RELIGION I have done my best to die before this book is published PART ONE OF THE CONTROVERSIAL BIOGRAPHY OF ROBERT RUNCIE, IN WEEKEND



PLUS THE BEST OF SATURDAY READING



Archbishop disowns biography

Runcie feared betrayal by gay clergy

By Ruth Gledhill, Religion Correspondent

LORD RUNCIE feared the influence of homosexuals in the Church of England and was concerned that they might stab him in the back, according to a controversial biography of the former Archbishop of Canterbury.

Lord Runcie, who recently admitted that he had knowingly ordained a practising homosexual, told Mr Carpenter that a large percentage of clergy were homosexual and, in many cases, practising. He generally took the line that heterosexual relationships were the norm for Christian behaviour. But in a section of the book that will enrage gay rights campaigners, he went on to say that some "quite outstanding" cler-

insisted that he was not a homosexual and preferred female company, although it was only when he got married that he realised "how enjoyable it was".

The former Archbishop was also surprisingly frank about his friendship with the late Gareth Bennett, of New College, Oxford, who committed suicide after writing a strongly critical preface to Crossford's Clerical Directory. Mr Carpenter paints a picture of an Archbishop tantalising a frustrated cleric with hints of promotion that came to nothing, while benefiting from his talent as a speechwriter.

Mr Carpenter, who was granted access to Dr Bennett's diaries and correspondence, says that he considered the Archbishop a supporter and continually hoped that he would put him up for advancement in the Church. But Lord Runcie thought Dr Bennett "a menace on the telephone... he would never get off it".

After Dr Bennett's suicide, a General Synod committee meeting put out a statement expressing grief, but the Archbishop was "a bit hurt" because it included no specific expression of loyalty to him. He said: "I thought, I've devoted hours to these piddling meetings, and they're not prepared to put up some little statement of support."

Valerie Grove, Weekend page 1 Gay dilemma, Weekend page 2

There was no dishonesty on my part: he always knew the tape was running

Humphrey Carpenter, biographer of Robert Runcie

The book, with its revelations about the Archbishop's sexuality, opinions and private thoughts, is serialised in The Times from today. Other controversial subjects include Lord Runcie's relationships with the Queen, Baroness Thatcher and the Prince and Princess of Wales. Lord Runcie invited the author, Humphrey Carpenter, to be his biographer shortly before he retired in 1991 and gave him hours of tape-recorded interview. But he was so alarmed by the end result that he withdrew his support and wrote a postscript saying: "I have done my best to die before this book is published."

In an interview with Valerie Grove, Mr Carpenter said that when Lord Runcie saw the first draft he tried to suppress the book. "But there was no dishonesty on my part. He always knew the tape was running."

Judge names juvenile rapist

By Kathryn Knight

A JUDGE took the unusual step yesterday of naming a 16-year-old who orchestrated the vicious gang rape of a Japanese student, aged 23, on her first visit to London. Judge Graham Boal sentenced Gerard Molloy, whom he

described as "a danger to the public", to ten years in prison. The judge said that five rapists, aged 15 to 23, had subjected the student to a horrific ordeal which they had deliberately aggravated by instructing their lawyers to make "outrageous suggestions" during cross-examination. The victim's condition deteriorated after she endured 31 hours in the witness box over 12 days, believed to be the longest period a rape victim has ever spent giving evidence. "This added insult to injury and heaped further indignity and humiliation on her," the judge said.

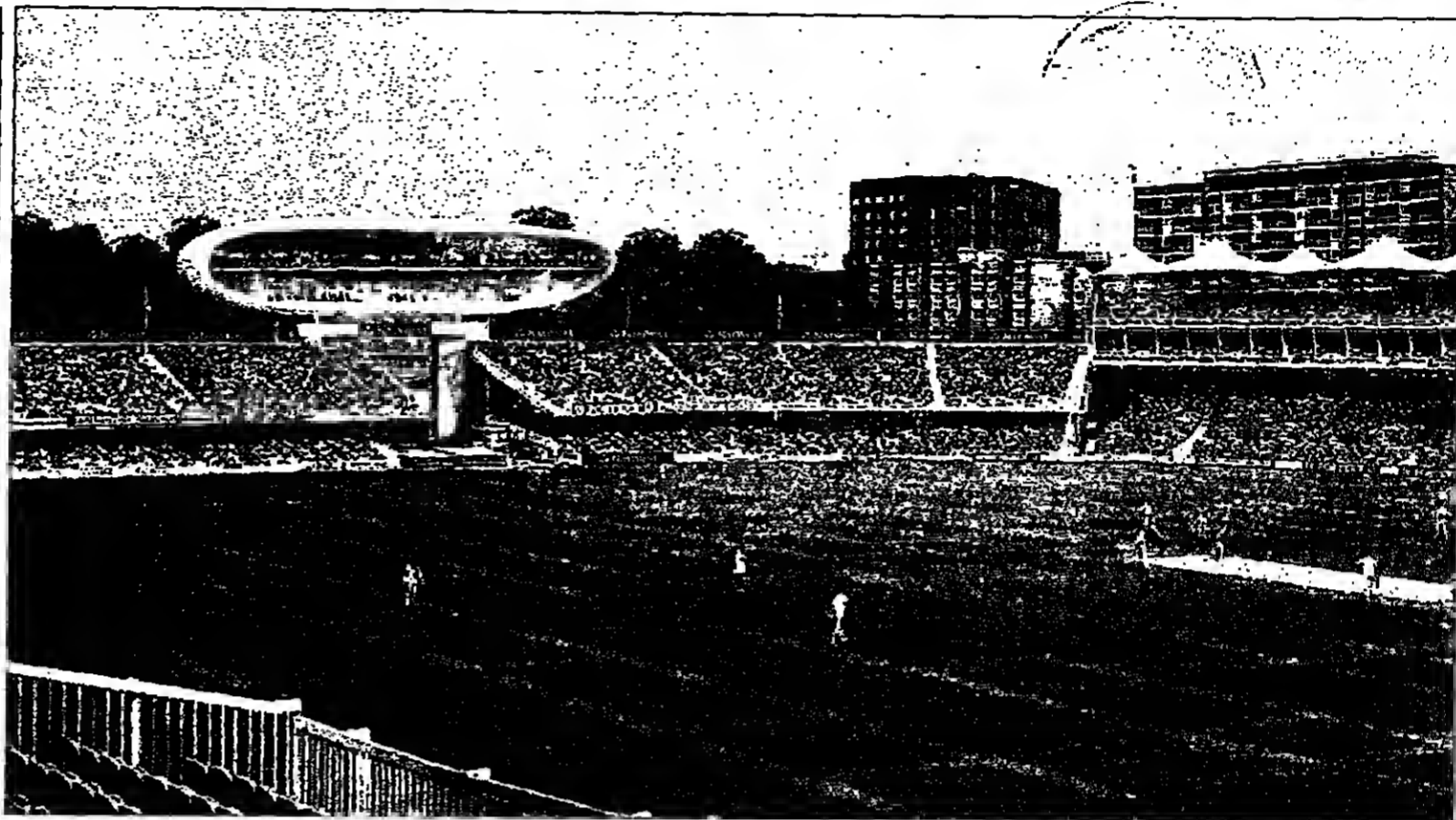
He added that he hoped the publication of the names of Molloy and fellow gang member Tony Baksh, 15, who was

given 30 months, would act as a deterrent to help to protect other girls.

Gerard Molloy was also sentenced to two six-year terms for aiding and abetting others to rape the student, and four years for three indecent assaults. The sentences are to run concurrently.

The case has prompted renewed calls for action to overhaul court proceedings in rape trials in which victims are forced to relive their ordeal. Victim Support urged the Bar Council to "consider whether better practices should be introduced to ensure that victims in rape cases do not have to suffer such treatment".

The victim had been in Continued on page 2, col 1



A computer-enhanced picture of a game at Lord's watched over by late 20th century technology in the sausage-shape of an elevated press box

By Robin Young

THERE is life on Mars, and by the look of it Martians will soon be playing at Lord's. NatWest yesterday took the wraps off a £2.6 million state-of-the-art media centre it is going to provide for the home of cricket. To most people the impressions of the futuristic building looked like something straight out of Close Encounters.

There were other interpretations. "A hi-tech gherkin," suggested one MCC type. "A hamburger without the beef," tried another. "Looks like a powder compact. It won't suit cricketers' faces."

Until now there have been no purpose-designed media facilities at Lord's, cricketers' correspondents and broadcasters finding niches in various parts of the Pavilion and the Warner stand. The sausage-shaped building, compared by yet another critic to "Al Jolson's lips", has been designed by the award-winning architects Future Systems.

It is defined as "a semi-monocoque", and suggestions that it resembles "a beached submarine" or "a stranded dirigible" prove not too wide of the mark. The media centre will be built in a boatyard, using the

The gherkin has landed at Lord's

latest in boat-building technology. Once in place behind the bowler's arm and safely berthed between the Compton and Edrich stands at the Nursery End, the good ship Media Centre will accommodate 250 journalists and photographers, and will house a restaurant which can double as a lecture theatre for 120. The towers to support the

building are to be built this winter. Installation will be in December next year or January 1998, and the fully-fitted article should be complete by April 1998, a year in advance of the World Cup matches in England in 1999.

The planning application was submitted to Westminster City Council only yesterday, so there is plenty of time to bowl a few googlies by way of objections.

NatWest final, page 52

Saddam's troops digging in

Iraqi troops have not moved far from the city of Arbil following America's raids. Today Andrew Finkel reports how he witnessed an entire Iraqi battalion digging in around Koshlapa, 100 miles south of Arbil. President Saddam's latest strategy became apparent as Britain abandoned its effort to get the Security Council to criticise Iraq after determined opposition from Russia. Page 12

School selection

A London borough is to become the first education authority to introduce selection in all schools since Labour brought in neighbourhood comprehensives. Bromley, where Harriet Harman, the Shadow Social Security Secretary, has sent her son, will consider a request from the last secondary school in their control to select 15 per cent. Page 5

Clinton lead

President Clinton remains up to 17 points ahead of his Republican challenger Bob Dole according to three new opinion polls, in spite of a new sex scandal surrounding his disgraced former political adviser, Dick Morris. Page 15

Pressure grows on Yeltsin to step down for heart operation

FROM RICHARD BEESTON IN MOSCOW

PRESIDENT YELTSIN last night came under growing pressure to step down and appoint a replacement to run Russia, while he undergoes heart surgery.

In an unprecedented move by members of Mr Yeltsin's administration and opposition politicians, his frank admission about his serious heart ailment drew calls that he appoint Viktor Chernomyrdin, the Prime Minister, as interim head of state. Predictably, the most vocal figure was General Aleksandr Lebed, Russia's National Security Adviser, who gave a warning that the country could be endangered by a power vacuum in the Kremlin unless measures were taken now to end speculation.

"In the next days, Boris Yeltsin absolutely must immediately designate who will replace him," said the blunt talking Afghan war veteran, who has just returned from his latest peace mission to the Caucasus. "Anything can happen in a few hours."

According to Russian doctors, the Kremlin leader will undergo a multiple bypass surgery later this month in Moscow. Although he is plan-

ning to hold talks with Helmut Kohl, the German Chancellor, today outside the city, he has no other official engagements and is likely to be off work for several weeks. Russia's constitution provides for the President to be replaced by the Prime Minister if the head of state is physically unfit to hold office.

Although General Lebed endorsed Mr Chernomyrdin as the only feasible interim leader, he went on to attack the Prime Minister for "getting into a muddle" in his criticism of peace efforts to end the conflict in Chechnya. He added menacingly: "I am a fighting man, and the Prime Minister would do well to realise that."



Lebed: gave warning of dangerous power vacuum

illness, as ever, for their own self-serving ends," said Mr Zyuganov, who came second in July's presidential race.

Another Communist, Gennady Seleznyov, the Speaker of the Duma, the lower house of parliament, gave a warning that unless the Mr Yeltsin transferred authority to Mr Chernomyrdin before his operation, the assembly would take the matter to the Constitutional Court. In spite of the calls for him to assume power, Mr Chernomyrdin, a reliable but uninspiring figure, stayed silent with his aides insisting that it was far too early to begin talk of a leadership change.

An important factor in the Kremlin jockeying for position will be the role of Anatoli Chubais, the head of the presidential administration, a powerful institution, which may resist attempts at appointing an interim leader who could curtail its considerable powers.

The unspoken truth was that Russia must now confront the issue of who will lead the country as the Yeltsin era comes to a close.

Surgeons braced, page 17

WEATHER 26 CROSSWORD 26 COURT & SOCIAL 24

LETTERS 23 OBITUARIES 25 SIMON JENKINS 22

BUSINESS NEWS 27-30 WEEKEND MONEY 31-43 SPORT 46-52

GARDENING: WEEKEND... 4, 5 BOOKS: WEEKEND 12, 13 TRAVEL: WEEKEND 17-23



Coming on October 1st Virgin Drive Thru Check In.

Businessman insists money was an expression of personal support for Tony Blair's leadership

Chelsea chief denies seeking favour with £1m donation

By ARTHUR LEATHLEY, JAMES LANDALE AND RUSSELL JENKINS

MATTHEW HARDING, the businessman who is donating £1 million to the Labour Party, denied yesterday that he was seeking tax breaks for his company or trying to curry political favour.

Mr Harding, 42, who owns the insurance group Benfield and is vice-chairman of Chelsea Football Club, said that the gift was a heartfelt expression of his support for the leadership of Tony Blair, whom he described as the man to take Britain into the millennium.

Flanked by watchful Labour Party officials on the steps of his marble and stone offices in the City of London, he said: "What new Labour under Tony Blair's leadership is trying to do with the country is the right thing at the right time. In the United States you can be fabulously wealthy and a Democrat and nobody bats an eyelid."

The donation, which has embarrassed the Conservative Party, has reignited the dispute over the funding of political parties. Labour said that the disclosure underlined the party's openness in divulging the identities of its financial backers and challenged the Tories to list their donors. Brian Mawhinney, the Tory party chairman, remained adamant that the Conservatives would not divulge names.

Mr Harding's support is by far the biggest personal donation to the Labour Party, although senior figures were coy about the period over which the money was being paid. However, they were privately furious that the revelation had come weeks before they had planned to announce it at the annual conference in Blackpool.

Mr Harding answered media questions yesterday under the gaze of the party's press officers. Asked whether he was seeking tax breaks, he replied: "No, it has nothing to do with the Benfield Group. It is a personal donation from me to the Labour Party under Tony Blair's

leadership. The fact that work at Benfield has nothing to do with it. He joked that he would be disappointed if John Major stopped going to see Chelsea play as a result of the donation.

"I think that, as we come towards the millennium, it is a good opportunity for the whole country to review exactly how society and the economy is governed," he said. "I think Tony Blair, with all he is setting out to do with new Labour, is very much the right thing at the right time."

The extra financial backing comes at a crucial stage for Labour, which has always struggled to match the Conservatives in the amount it spends on advertising in the run-up to general elections. Labour officials said that Mr Harding's money was already being spent on its current £1 million poster campaign, the latest stage of which will be unveiled by Tony Blair today.

Dr Mawhinney defended the Tories' practice of not naming their benefactors. "It is up to the donor to decide if they want publicity. It is a matter for Mr Harding how he spends his money and who he tells about it. The truth is, only millionaires could afford a Labour government."

Labour this week disclosed the names of 17 donors who gave the party more than £5,000 each during 1995. Each of the donations, however, was under £30,000, prompting Tory claims that Labour was still failing to divulge details of its biggest source of funding, from the trade unions. Labour receives about £2.5 million a year from the unions but does not disclose specific details.

Tory leaders claim that, far from being open about its funding, Labour covers up much of its union support, notably the money paid to individual MPs through their constituencies.



Matthew Harding with John and Norma Major at Downing Street in May. He is vice-chairman of Chelsea, Mr Major's team

Clubbable tycoon who likes to hunt with the Tories and run about with Labour

By JASON NISSE

ON CHELSEA match days Matthew Harding, the Labour Party's new £1 million benefactor, can be found in a west London pub. He will be sporting a clip-on earring and a Chelsea shirt and enjoying a pint with friends who used to stand on Stamford Bridge's notorious terrace. The Shed.

An hour or so before the game the 42-year-old insurance tycoon changes into a suit, slips the earring into his pocket and heads for the directors' box, where he robs shoulders with David Mellor, a former Tory Cabinet minister, and, on occasion, the Prime Minister.

Mr Harding is a man who likes to hunt with the hounds and run with the hare. He is affable and clubbable, one of the lads who happens to be a tough businessman who was paid £3.3 million in salary and £2.4 million in dividends by his insurance group, Benfield, last year. During the week he lives with his 25-year-old girlfriend, Vicky Jaramillo, and their baby Ella in their home in Richmond upon Thames. At weekends he returns to his palatial

house in Ditching, East Sussex, with its deer park and full-size football field, where his wife and four teenage children live.

Mr Harding's investment in Chelsea appeared to be an act of love. But it is also reaping dividends. He paid £16 million for the freehold of the ground and the 25 per cent stake he bought in the club after its flotation earlier this year has already delivered an £11 million profit. Should his less than cordial relationship with Ken Bates, the Chelsea chairman, blow up again, Mr Harding could sell out and still end up smelling of roses.

His solid middle-class background, public school education and a career taking him from teaboy to chairman would typically make him a Conservative. But Mr Harding has overvoted Tory and enjoys flaunting his socialist beliefs in front of the true blues in the Chelsea box. He is as much at ease on the terraces as he is at Lloyd's of London, where he met the former Lloyd's chief executive Peter Middleton, whom he invited to the Chelsea board.

Mr Harding's insurance clerk father introduced him to Ted Benfield in a City pub 23

years ago and he was hired as the most junior employee in Mr Benfield's new insurance broker business, making the tea and opening the post. Within nine years he was so vital to the business that he could demand a seat on the board. Six years later he bought Mr Benfield out, borrowing £160,000 to buy a 32 per cent stake that is now worth £120 million.

Benfield, which occupies the former offices of Hambros Bank, carved out a niche in disaster insurance. It also became known as a good place to work. The staff are young and well paid — the average salary last year was £166,000 — and Mr Harding runs the place with enthusiasm and a sense of humour. That comes across in his chairman's statements. Last year he cootained a football reference, saying that in re-insurance "everybody is talking a great game — but are they playing one?" The previous year he quoted Holden Caulfield from J.D. Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye* saying: "... I'm pretty sure he yelled 'Good luck' at me... I hope to hell out. I'd never yell 'Good luck' at anybody". Certainly out at his fellow Chelsea fan, John Major.

Blair needs union cash, at least for time being

LABOUR has always received some money from a few wealthy industrialists and most, like Matthew Harding, have been self-made entrepreneurs outside the business establishment.

For a businessman to come out in public support of Labour has been regarded as unconventional, even perhaps taking a risk with one's career. But throughout Labour's history there have always been a few well-off backers, often from family-run businesses and some with old Liberal non-conformist links. Tony Benn, for instance, comes from a wealthy publishing family and his father was a Liberal convert to Labour in the 1920s.

In the postwar era very few large public companies have made dona-

RIDDELL ON POLITICS

tions to Labour. Even if some of their senior executives have been sympathetic to the party, they knew it would provoke a furious row with their mainly Tory shareholders. Even now only Pearson and Tate and Lyle have been named by Labour as giving more than £5,000 last year.

Both the Tories and Labour are targeting wealthy individuals who prospered during the 1980s. While more businessmen now give to Labour than did before the Blair era, many more still donate to the Tories. Like some other big-named donors, Mr Harding has built a successful medium-sized business rather than a household-name corporation. The best-known company chairman sympathetic to "new" Labour's aims is David Sainsbury, who comes from the Labour rather than the Tory side of a politically divided family.

Apart from occasional big names, Labour has raised much more from smaller one-off and regular donors, up from 33,500 in 1992 to nearly 120,000 last year. While the unions' contribution is down from three-quarters a decade ago, it remains more than a half. Mr Blair may welcome the backing of industrialists but he still needs the unions, for the time being.

PETER RIDDELL

Can't...
be...
Barrister...
pol...
in job...

Devolution policy in disarray after Labour U-turn on referendums

By ARTHUR LEATHLEY

LABOUR'S devolution plans collapsed in disarray yesterday when the party abandoned, after six days, a pledge to hold a second referendum on the tax-varying powers of a Scottish parliament.

In the third policy change on devolution in less than three months, the party leadership reverted to an earlier policy of holding a single referendum with two questions. The move was an embarrassing reversal of the party's decision, taken only last weekend, that after it had been set up, a Scottish assembly would hold a referendum to confirm that the public wanted it to have power to raise or lower tax by a 3p. Scottish voters would now have just one referendum, to be held within weeks of Labour taking office, on

whether they want an assembly and whether that assembly should have the power to vary taxes.

The about-turn is embarrassing to a Labour leadership that was confident that it had spiked the guns of Tory ministers claiming that Scottish people would be forced against their will to pay higher taxes.

Michael Forsyth, the Scottish Secretary, attacked the confusion among Labour leaders as "an extraordinary shambles. The whole thing is just a dog's breakfast. They are making it up as they go along."

Michael Heseltine, the deputy Prime Minister, will add to Labour's discomfort today when he addresses an anti-devolution rally organised by the Conservative party in Perth. Labour leaders made no

attempt to disguise their embarrassment. "This is a dreadful mess but we have to be big enough to face up to it and not run away," said a front-bench spokesman. The shift on a key manifesto commitment increases tensions in Scottish Labour ranks only days before Tony Blair embarks on a campaign tour. The Labour leader faces criticism from party activists who claim that devolution policy is being developed "on the hoof".

George Robertson, Shadow Scottish Secretary, called a hastily-arranged press conference in Scotland to break the news that he had dropped the two-referendum package. He said that the proposal — which he personally brokered as a compromise between senior Labour party figures in Scotland last weekend — "clearly does not have support".

Judge names rapist aged 16

Continued from page 1

London less than a month and spoke little English when she was tricked into visiting Molloy's home. She was kept prisoner and subjected to a humiliating sexual ordeal over two days while Molloy and his gang of five friends cheered on and encouraged each other, the Old Bailey was told.

Judge Boat said the way the gang had treated the victim defied belief. "To say you behaved like animals would do an injustice to the animal kingdom," he told them. "The courts must do everything in their power to protect girls from predators like you."

The judge was told that the victim, who comes from a rural community, was so ashamed of what had hap-

pened that she had not been able to tell her parents, since she believed the shock would bring shame, dishonour and possible suicide to the family. "No-one can have any real idea of the extent to which these events have scarred her future life," the judge said.

Gerrard Molloy, 16, was given two ten year sentences for two charges of rape. He was on bail for a burglary offence at the time of the rape, and has a number of previous convictions.

Jason Baksh, 18, was sentenced to two seven-year terms for two rapes, to run concurrently. Aymon Waite, 20, was given six years for rape and three years for indecent assault, to run concurrently. Roger Leslie, 19, three years



Tony Baksh, 15

Hill and Brixton area of south London. The judge told them that if they had been older they would all have received sentences in double figures.

Like rape victim Julia Mason, who spent six days in the witness box questioned by her attacker Ralston Edwards, the student's ordeal has led to calls for changed in legislation governing rape victims giving evidence. Julie Bindel of Justice for Women said the victim's ordeal was a disgrace. "It is totally unnecessary for women to be held in the witness box for so long. All too often witnesses in rape trials are treated as if they are on trial." Helen Peggs of Victim Support appealed for the Bar council to reassess cases with multiple defendant.

Women's...
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سكينة والاصل

Police decide artist's 'metaphor for human condition' is best kept out of sight

Cathedral shows naked video behind curtain

By PAUL WILKINSON

A HALF-HOUR video of a naked man being screened non-stop inside Durham Cathedral has been curtailed off from the gaze of casual visitors on police advice.

The Lottery-funded film, *The Messenger*, shows a man emerging from water, taking a breath, then submerging. The American video artist Bill Viola says it is "a metaphor for the human condition".

It was to have been shown in an open area beside the church's great western door, as part of a visual arts display which opens today. Durham police do not believe that it falls foul of the Obscene Publications Act, but they were concerned that its full frontal imagery might distress some visitors to the 900-year-old World Heritage site. Written warnings explaining the nature of the video are being pinned close by.

After a private preview of the exhibition yesterday, Detective Inspector Neil Redhead said that he was not offended: "I think this is a compromise which takes in the views of all concerned, bearing in mind there are children among visitors to the cathedral. I felt it

would be appropriate if it was screened from general view. This allows the presentation to be seen by those who want to see it and prevents offending more sensitive members of the public. I certainly gave no advice on whether I thought the video show was suitable for a place of worship."

Mr Viola is recognised as a leader in the new medium of video art. Last year he attracted controversy at the Tate Gallery with his work *The Nantes Trypich*, which featured his wife in the final stages of labour and his mother dying. Yesterday he said: "I don't agree with the taboo on male nudity. This is nothing to do with erotic art. I did not expect it to come down to the law."

The new work reportedly cost £200,000, paid for with a £97,000 Lottery grant and Government funding. It is part of the year-long visual arts festival throughout the North East. Most of the money has gone on installing video equipment.

In the film, a man makes gurgling noises as he holds his breath under the surface of a pool of crystal blue water. He

then rises in slow motion to the surface, gasping for air, before gradually disappearing again into the depths. Mr Viola said he hoped his work would "be on a par with the monumental religious paintings and frescoes of the past. The problem as an artist is how to get the message across in an impressive place like Durham Cathedral."

"My work shows a man gradually emerging from watery depths to take a breath of life, before once more being engulfed. The work is a metaphor for the human condition. It is about the transformation or journey of an individual until they break through to another world."

The video is supported by Visual Arts UK, Northern Arts and the Cathedral's Dean and Chapter. The Dean, the Very Rev John Arnold, said they had screened off the area as legal advice suggested it might infringe the Children's Act. "A child who had been sexually abused might come into the cathedral and be disturbed by a large nude male image. We decided to screen it off to show it in its entirety. The alternative was



The artist Bill Viola and the dean of Durham, the Very Rev John Arnold, with the video *The Messenger*

having to close it down. "I regret that I find nothing offensive in it but feel it is necessary. It is not heroic or erotic nudity. It is about vulnerability."

Canon Bill Hall, chaplain to the arts and recreation in the diocese said: "I am mystified that anyone could regard this exhibition as controversial. Were Bill Viola a controversial

artist, then I would think people might be justified to be upset. Instead we are fortunate to have an artist of such calibre dealing in a profoundly spiritual subject matter. It is a thing of great beauty."

When the exhibition ends on October 12, it will tour France, America and Japan before returning to stay in the North East. The recording will re-

peat continuously for seven hours each day, except during services. It was called and a waste of money by Peter Bruinvels, a member of the church synod and a former Tory MP. He said: "What a waste of funds. The Church needs new bells, organs and pews, the last thing it needs is male nudes."

One visitor, Mary Stevens,

63, a retired teacher from Harlow, Essex, said: "I can think of better places to have an art exhibition, especially one so risqué."

Alan Sykes, co-ordinator of Visual Arts UK, said: "We are sensitive to the fact that the cathedral is still a place of worship. We are still expecting many people coming to Durham just to see this."

Fraudsters milked EU in shuttle trip scam

A WEALTHY businessman was jailed for two years yesterday for his part in a fraud that saw a 20-tonne load of powdered milk shuttled across the English Channel to France and back five times, claiming an EU subsidy each time.

Anthony Dyer, 60, of Chislehurst, southeast London, and his two accomplices received £158,000 in subsidies by telling EU bureaucrats they were sending the milk to Albania. Lorton Crown Court was told.

The fraud was uncovered by a joint operation between British and Albanian Customs. Dyer's company, Gemgaz of Erith, Kent, claimed subsidies on eight 20-tonne shipments of powdered milk to Albania.

The EU Intervention Board Executive Agency (IBE) pays the cash to companies exporting certain goods outside the Union, allowing them to be sold at a competitive price. Investigators found that two consignments were illegally sold in Greece, where they commanded a higher price than in Albania but were not eligible for subsidy. One was sent across the Channel five times without being opened.

Alan Steward, 48, a salesman of Chelmsfield, southeast London, who arranged deals in Greece, was jailed for two years and Graham Powell, 28, a lorry driver, of Blackfen, southeast London, for nine months. The three were ordered to pay £158,000 to the IBE and Dyer was ordered to pay £50,000 costs.

Barrister faced poll tax dodger in job interview

By PAUL WILKINSON

A BARRISTER who claims she was barred from a senior job because she was a woman told an industrial tribunal yesterday that her interview panel had included a poll tax dodger whom she had successfully prosecuted.

Margaret O'Donoghue also claimed that the sexist attitude of Redcar and Cleveland Council was summed up by the authority leader who boasted he had never been in the kitchen for 15 years and he fancied having five wives. During a discussion on the Labour Party's policy on promoting women, Brian Roberts also allegedly told Ms O'Donoghue that there were too many women on the council.

The tribunal at Middlesbrough was told that Ms O'Donoghue, 40, worked for the new Redcar and Cleveland Council as a barrister specialising in environmental advocacy in court. She applied for the post of senior solicitor but told the tribunal she did not even get an interview despite being the only applicant. She was shortlisted when the job was re-advertised and was surprised to find Ian Jeffrey, a councillor, on her interview panel. The job was given to a man whom she claimed had less experience.

Four years ago, when Ms O'Donoghue worked for Langbaurgh council, she successfully prosecuted Mr Jef-



O'Donoghue claims council was sexist

frey for non-payment of poll tax. At the time he was chairman of the Cleveland Police Authority. Ms O'Donoghue said Mr Jeffrey's presence on her selection panel breached guidelines stating that panel members should be seen to be impartial.

She told the tribunal: "I considered it inappropriate that he should be a member of the panel that interviewed me." Mr Jeffrey said: "I had nothing at all against the individual who prosecuted me. In fact quite the opposite."

Ms O'Donoghue, from Eston, Cleveland, claims sexual discrimination against Redcar and Cleveland, Langbaurgh's successor authority. The council denies her claim. The tribunal panel reserved judgment to a later date.

Children in care 'procured into vice'

By DOMINIC KENNEDY

MORE than 50 children in care are believed to have been lured into prostitution by a network of adult pimps and paedophiles in Cardiff, it is alleged in an unpublished report.

The draft report, seen by *The Times*, says that nearly all the underage prostitutes in the area had been in contact with the care system. The disclosure comes as 400 former residents and social workers yesterday called police investigating an alleged paedophile ring at the former Taff Vale residential home in Cardiff.

The unpublished study, by Cardiff University and the Children's Society, was commissioned by South Glamorgan council, which ran Taff Vale but has since disappeared in local government reorganisation. It was prepared in 1994 amid concern that children absconding from care were becoming involved in risky behaviour through a network of adults.

One social services manager dealing with young prostitutes told the authors: "They were all part of the care system, that's a common factor... I think that possibly the link is that they [the abusers] know where there is a ready supply of vulnerable youngsters with pretty damaged experiences behind them. I mean youngsters that are prepared to take the risk for a couple of quid."

Women's football fields first magazine

By CAROL MIDDLEY

THE first magazine dedicated to women's football has been shown the red card even before kick-off. The monthly colour magazine was to have been titled *ElleFC* but Emap, publishers of *Elle*, objected. The magazine, which goes on sale next month, has been renamed *On the Ball*.

Jeanne Smith, 23, the editor, said: "There have been football fanzines for women before but this will be the first national full-cover magazine. Obviously we are disappointed not to be able to use *ElleFC*, because it was a play on the fact that ladies' football is often called LFC."

She said that the £1.50 magazine, based in Newcastle, would shake off the stereotype of female football players as both as well as covering league matches,



Smith: plans advice that ranges from tactics and fitness to the best make-up and bras

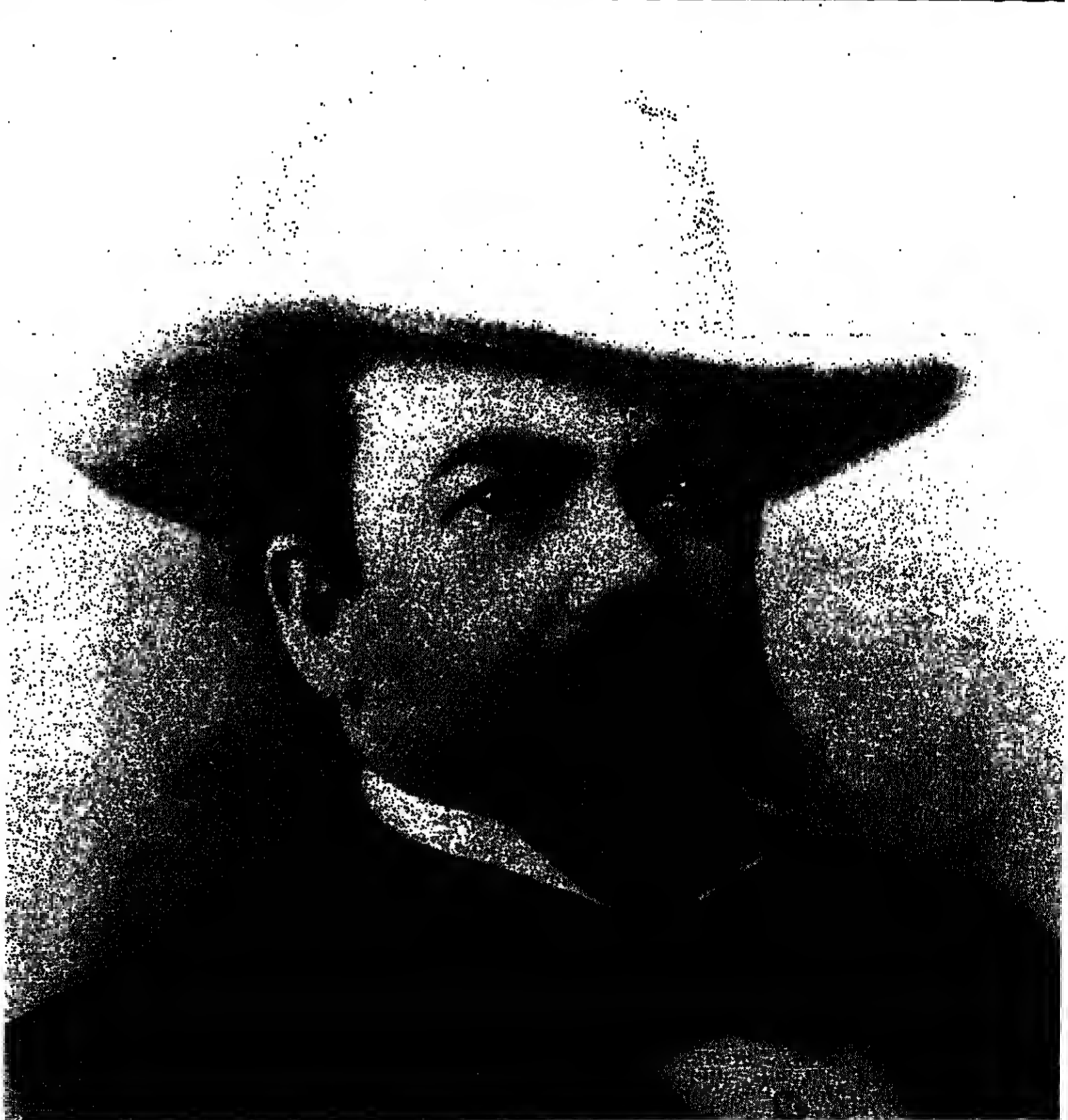
estimated 20,000 players, 600 registered clubs and a growing army of fans. "There is a totally unexplored market out there which we are hoping to get into," said Miss Smith, whose previous magazine experience was in sales for an armed forces publication. The registered clubs did not include university and small local teams.

She said the magazine would be a bright, 52-page product which would cover the sport in a lively way. "It is not like years ago when women who played football were considered masculine,

fashion side of football, but the sport is what we are about first and foremost."

Ms Smith, a lifelong fan of the game though not a player, said she would like to address such topics as the need for specially-designed women's strips. "For years people have criticised women who play football for being shapeless and looking like men, but a lot of the time that is because they are wearing strips designed for men."

"A lot of women have to wear children's boots because adult sizes are too wide because they are de-



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Outside applications from fully comprehensive areas could create shortage of places for residents

Tory borough leads way to selection in all schools

By JOHN O'LEARY
EDUCATION EDITOR

A LONDON borough is to become the first education authority to introduce selection in all its schools since Labour brought in the neighbourhood comprehensive.

Councillors in Bromley, where Harriet Harman, the Shadow Social Security Secretary, has sent her son to school, meet on Monday to consider a request from the last secondary school under their control to select 15 per cent of its pupils.

The 14 other comprehensive schools, all grant-maintained, have announced plans for partial selection.

Sir Robert Balchin, chairman of the Grant-Maintained Schools Foundation, said yesterday that at least two groups of schools in other parts of England were waiting to follow suit. The long-term consequence is likely to be a boost for school in every town.

Canon Park Girls' School will become the first local authority comprehensive to introduce partial academic selection if Bromley Education Committee agrees. Although councillors have proclaimed their support for fully comprehensive education, a majority of members in the Tory-controlled authority are

expected to accept the school's case that it cannot afford to risk losing its brightest candidates.

Roger Wood, the borough's deputy director of education, said: "We have been opposed to partial selection on principle because it is not consistent with maintaining or expanding choice and diversity. But do you stick to a principle blindly when your own family is going to suffer?"

The grant-maintained comprehensives decided on 15 per cent selection, the maximum allowed without ministerial approval, when one of their number, Hayes School, applied to select a quarter of its

intake. The 13 schools will hold a single 11-plus style of test in November.

Mr Wood said the move would attract more "Harriet Harman-type applications" from parents living in fully comprehensive boroughs. With a fifth of places in Bromley schools already taken by children from other boroughs, a shortage of places for borough residents was inevitable.

The Funding Agency for Schools is already planning a new second-ary school to cater for rising demand in Bromley and had to find extra places in grant-maintained schools to avert a shortfall

this term. Mr Wood said that up to 100 children could be without schools next September if the present pattern of out-of-borough applications continued.

Sir Robert said: "There is bound to be demand from socialist boroughs when parents are given the opportunity of choosing a partially selective school. And I believe there will be a considerable knock-on effect from the Bromley schools' initiative."

He added: "I know of one or two areas with numerous grant-maintained schools where groups of heads are giving very careful consideration to 15 per cent selection and I am sure they will go ahead. They are unlikely to go much further in the short term but the trend is towards more selection."

Bromley already has two grammar schools, Newstead Wood, for girls, and St Olave's, for boys, which is attended by Ms Harman's son. Both are high in the examination league tables.

New regulations introduced by Gillian Shephard, the Education and Employment Secretary, allow all grant-maintained schools to select up to 15 per cent of pupils for a range of specialisms or on general academic ability. Legislation

is expected to be published in the autumn is expected to raise the limit to 50 per cent, with a lower threshold for local authority schools.

The Funding Agency considered making Bromley's new school fully selective but is now expected to opt for a comprehensive. Under current regulations, it would be up to the governors whether to have a partially selective intake. A change of government would create further uncertainty. Labour is committed to parents' ballots where there is opposition to existing selection but David Blunkett, Shadow Education Secretary, has said no new selective schools would be created.

Blind pilot takes charity to the air

A BLIND pilot took to the skies yesterday on a round-Britain charity flight to raise money for the Royal National Institute for the Blind.

Ken Woodward, 46, from Brightlingsea, Essex, who lost his sight after a chemical explosion, will be meeting celebrities along the route. His nine-day flight, which started from Elstree, Hertfordshire, is inspired by the help he received when trying to rebuild his life at the institute's rehabilitation centre in Torquay. "They

gave me that hope, that vision and a future, and that's why we are doing this," he said.

During the flight the father of four will be aided by Captain John Ripley, of the Loodoo School of Flying, who will navigate and give him radio instructions. Mr Woodward admits that he was terrified when he first piloted a plane four years ago. He said: "It frightened me to death, but when it was all over I thought, 'I took the controls of that - I'm blind and I did that.'"



Ken Woodward's wife, Sue, watching with his guide dog, Prince, as he takes off from Elstree yesterday and, above, Mr Woodward at the controls. A colleague will navigate

Footballer wins cash for injury in tackle

By FRANCES GIBB

A FOOTBALLER has agreed an out-of-court settlement over a tackle that ended his career. John Uzzell suffered severe facial injuries during a league match five years ago.

Uzzell, former left back with Torquay United, was suing Brentford FC and their former striker, Gary Blissent, over an aerial challenge that left him with a shattered cheekbone and eye socket. The case was due to be heard before a High Court judge in Exeter over four days next week. Yesterday the case was settled and Uzzell, 37, now a postman near Plymouth, was said to be "very happy" with the compensation offer. He had been seeking damages of about £100,000.

Barbara Head, his lawyer, said: "The loose ends have been tied up and the case has been settled. It is subject to a confidentiality agreement not to discuss the terms." John Smith, for Brentford, said: "There has been no admission of liability."

Museum makes opening move to market Roman board game

By ROBIN YOUNG

A ROMAN board game discovered in excavations at Stanway, Essex, could be marketed for modern players.

The front-runner taking interest in the find at a burial site is the British Museum Company, merchandising arm of the national depository for ancient treasures. Rebecca Bone, a spokeswoman, said yesterday: "It is a great idea. We have been talking about it this morning, though the thing is not even completely excavated yet." The company

already markets the Royal Game of Ur, using rules developed by Dr Irving Finkel, assistant keeper in the Western Asiatic Department.

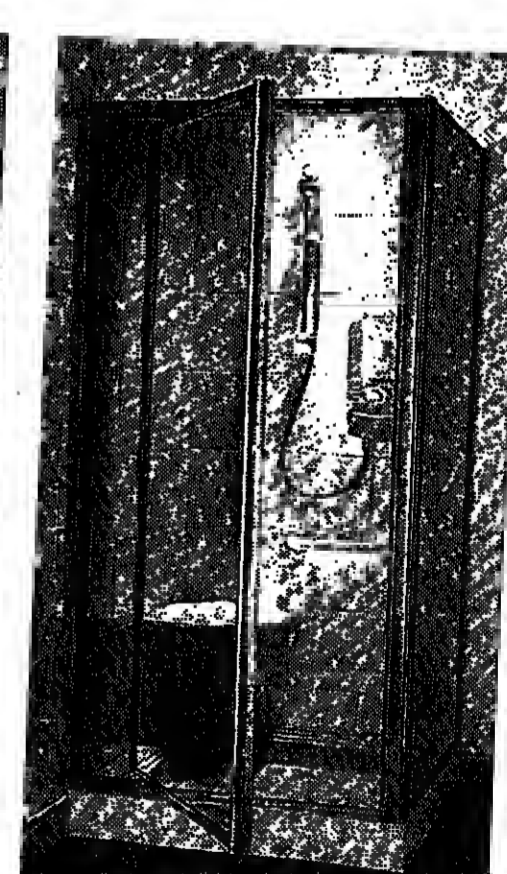
He said: "When we have the whole thing excavated it should be possible to do a decent job of reconstructing the game from evidence in Latin poetry or pictorial representations. The board has not survived but seems to have been an oddly shaped wooden box lined with leather. We have the dimensions and the bronze corners."

"At present it looks as if the

newly found Roman game is a form of *Latrunculus*, or 'lind soldiers', but the board is less like a chessboard than in other versions. There are some reproductions of *Latrunculus* on the market, but with the new evidence we would do the best we could to come up with something authentic yet rather different."

Among better-known board game suppliers, a spokeswoman for Waddingtons in Leeds said: "I do not think this would interest us. We are attracted by hi-tech future rather than distant past."

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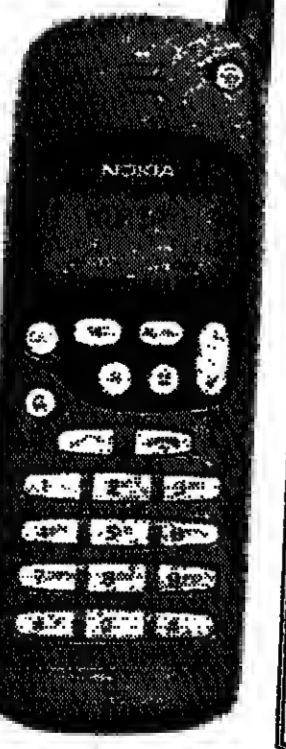
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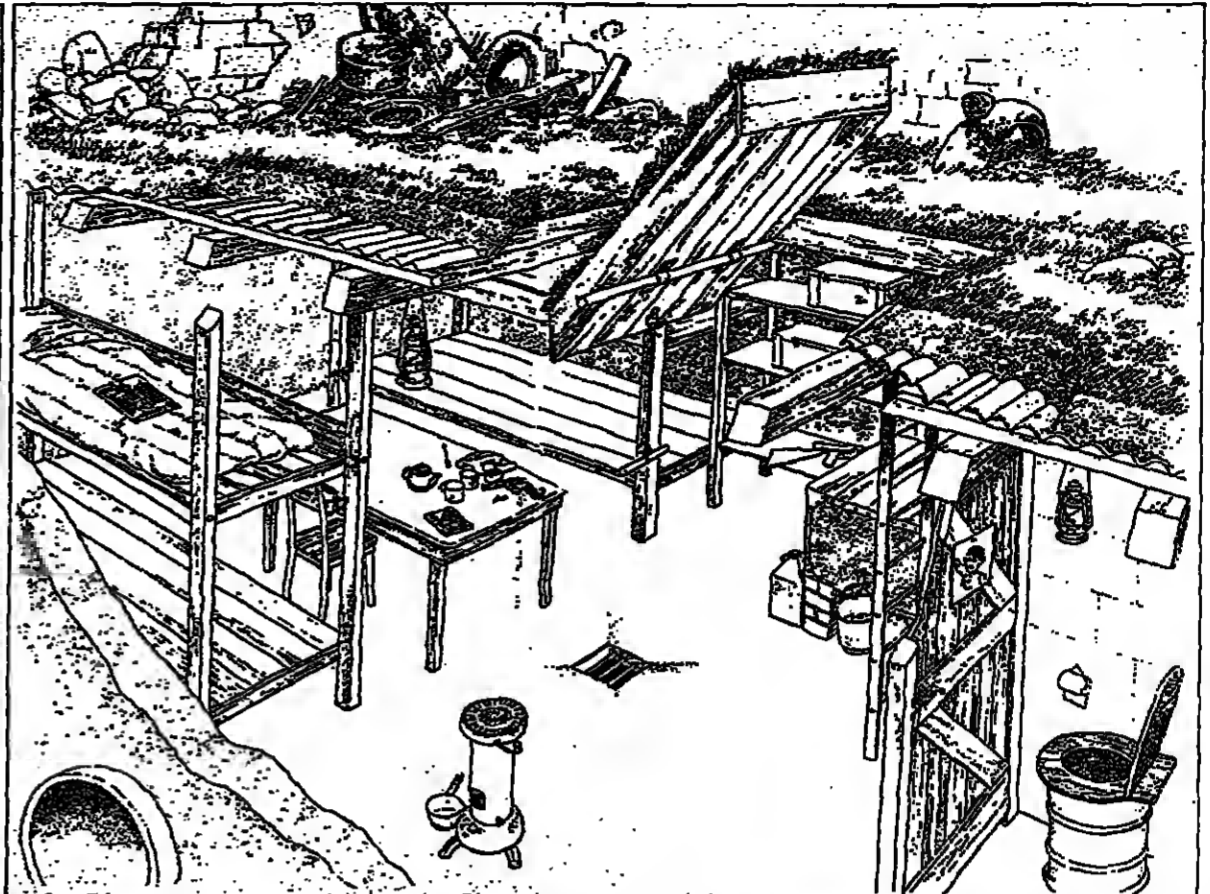
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Friends thought they were in Dad's Army. In fact, they were Britain's resistance fighters



Going underground: John Sealy, now 73, at the entrance to the bunker where, as a young man, he prepared to fight to the end for his country. An artist's impression shows the extensive preparations behind the guerrilla camps

Honour at last for elite force whose hour never came

By MICHAEL EVANS
DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

SURVIVORS of a special wartime force who were secretly trained as resistance fighters in the event of German occupation are to receive medals more than 50 years later.

The men of the Auxiliary Units told their families they were just members of the Home Guard and wore the normal "Dad's Army" uniform. Instead, they slipped away to concealed bunkers to prepare for Nazi invaders. Trained in silent killing, they stockpiled explosives and weapons and studied local targets they might one day have to destroy or sabotage.

They were the men who would help fulfil Churchill's 1940 promise: "We shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender."

More than 3,000 men had been trained to operate independently if the Government



Don't panic, Captain Mairwaring: TV's *Dad's Army* reinforced the popular view of the Home Guard

collapsed, but they never had the chance to prove themselves. They were stood down in 1944. Only now are the survivors aware that they are eligible for medals for their wartime service. The Ministry of Defence confirmed yesterday that the Army Medals Issuing Office at Droitwich, Warwickshire, would award the former secret commands they had completed three years' service. A spokesman said: "If these men were with

the regular Army, they would be entitled to the General Service Medal. If they were with the Home Guard, they would get the Defence Medal."

One former member of the Auxiliary Units, farmer John Sealy, 73, this week revisited his former secret bunker, 15ft underground at Westbury sub-Mendip in Somerset, a few miles from his home. He said: "My parents thought I was in the Home Guard. They couldn't know what I was really doing because the Germans could have got hold of them and tortured them."

"It was so frustrating. I was 17 and all my mates were in uniform and rushing off to the Army and the RAF and impressing all the girls. I was accepted as RAF aircrew but then they sent me back here. We were needed more where we were."

While other fit young men were in the forces, the secret force were an exception within the Home Guard of mostly older men and reserved occupations. Highly trained and

"armed to the teeth", he still had to pretend he was just a plain old farm lad with a Home Guard uniform.

He said: "In 1945, I told my parents, but by then nobody was very interested. There was no glory for us, no medals."

Pointing to where his underground hideout used to be, Mr Sealy said: "There was a hidden trap door here. The regular Army installed this shelter and the landowner had to be sworn to secrecy."

"We only came at night. It was full of explosives, revolvers and Tommy guns, as well

as bunk beds. We had two fall-back bunkers in case this was found, but we didn't know where other units were. We were to be the secret army. For a long time we really thought it would happen."

Donald Brown, an Imperial War Museum researcher, came across survivors from the special wartime units while studying Britain's concrete pill boxes. He said: "It's a fascinating story. In 1940, as each country in Europe fell to Germany, Churchill asked why nobody was fighting behind the lines. He ordered

British officers to go out and recruit and train bright young men all over England. They were all sworn to secrecy. Even now they hesitate before discussing what they did."

According to the files, Churchill even reached an agreement with the Americans to arm the secret soldiers with Thompson sub-machineguns and Colt 45 revolvers seized from gangsters by the FBI.

Professor Christopher Andrew of Cambridge University said: "This shows that when Churchill said, 'We will fight on the beaches', it wasn't just

rhetoric. He meant it. Anyone not taking the invasion threat seriously in 1940 was crazy."

Mr Sealy still has a letter from Colonel F.W.R. Douglas, commander of the Auxiliary Units, ordering them to stand down in November 1944. The colonel wrote: "You were invited to do a job requiring more skill and coolness, more hard work and greater danger than was demanded of any other voluntary organisation. In view of the fact that your lives depended on secrecy, no public recognition will be possible."

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MONDAY IN THE TIMES



RUNCIE AND THE ROYALS

In part 2 of our serialisation: the "strange" Royal Family and the mystique of its matriarch

By MICHAEL HO

A THREAT by ran New Forest to ban commercial picking of for London restat provoked an outcry. Several who claim ar to harvest the resupply of edible fu. The Forestry C which manages th behalf of the Crow prevent the annua foragers who can £2,000 a week London stores an with delicacies su the horn-of-pleni pery jacks.

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Protestants closer to boycott of Irish goods

By NICHOLAS WATT, CHIEF IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

THE prospect of a cross-border sectarian boycott of goods in Northern Ireland increased yesterday when Gerry Adams threw his weight behind a campaign by nationalists to shun Protestant shops and companies.

An unnamed consortium of Protestant wholesalers has already threatened to stop buying products from the Irish Republic from October 1 if the nationalist boycott does not end.

The boycotts are the most glaring example of the dramatic rise in sectarian tension after loyalists blockaded towns and roads throughout Northern Ireland during the stand-off at Drumcree in July. The campaign was launched by nationalists in Castleterragh, Co Tyrone, in protest against Protestant businessmen who allegedly joined a blockade of the town during the Drumcree disturbances.

Protestant businesses have struck back. In Portadown, Co Armagh, loyalists placed posters in the town this week calling on their "brethren" to boycott Roman Catholic businesses.

In his first public comments since nationalists launched the boycotts two months ago, the Sinn Fein president said: "We accept as totally legitimate that Catholics should boycott those Orangemen or Unionists who were involved in the events of Drumcree." Mr Adams denied that Sinn Fein was orchestrating the campaign and insisted that the party was opposed to indiscriminate boycotts of Protestant businesses.

However, a leading loyalist accused Sinn Fein yesterday of forcing Catholics to boycott Protestant businesses. Hugh Smyth, the leader of the Progressive Unionist Party, the political wing of the Ulster Volunteer Force, said: "Over the past two weeks there was a filtering back to these shops by the Catholic community

and in some cases businesses were up by 25 per cent. But the day after their trip to the shops a car arrived with some of the bully boys of Sinn Fein and ordered the Catholics out of the shops."

The renewed sectarian tension has also spilled onto the streets. In North Belfast this week there were sectarian clashes three nights in a row, with political leaders on both sides blaming their opponents for starting the trouble, which led to terrifying ordeals for some residents.

□ Billy Wright, the loyalist who is under sentence of death from Protestant paramilitaries, appeared in court yesterday charged with assaulting two police officers.

Mr Wright, 36, was also charged with wounding a man in a hotel car park in Portadown, Co Armagh, in April last year, disorderly behaviour, causing an affray and resisting a police constable in the course of his duty. He was not formally called to answer the charges and the case at Craigavon Magistrates' Court, Co Armagh, was adjourned to November.

A defence solicitor said that Mr Wright, for whom an address was given in Portadown, would be contesting the charges.

Biting the bullet. Magazine, page 18

GOOD NEWS FOR BUILDING SOCIETY SAVERS.



See page 27

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Manchester United criticised over own-label whisky

By RICHARD DUCE

MANCHESTER United was criticised by a distinguished doctor yesterday for promoting its own brand of whisky. A link between hard drink and the sporting stars who turn out for United sent "completely the wrong message" to young supporters, said Professor Sir Leslie Turnbull, President of the Royal College of Physicians.

Sir Leslie originally complained to the club by letter but was so incensed by what he saw as its ambivalent response that he made the exchange public yesterday. He attacked not only the club's promotion of its whisky at £10.99 a bottle but also its branded crisps and chocolate. He said: "It is difficult enough to encourage children to eat healthily and take regular exercise without having some of their major sporting heroes backing products which will have the opposite effect. I am disappointed that the club has taken this view.

The label of Thickhead, the alcoholic fizzy drink, has been altered after criticism that the man on it was too appealing to young people. Jean Cussins, of the industry's regulatory body, The Portman Group, said: "The man now looks as if they have told him he is responsible for the million pounds lost by the company's first attempt." Carlsberg-Tetley, the brewer, put the cost at closer to £100,000.

which seems at odds with their other initiatives such as working with police forces against drug abuse." In his letter of July 1, Sir Leslie, a specialist in gastroenterology, who lives in Manchester, criticised Manchester United Premier Blend and his concern was echoed at the time by Alcohol Concern and some MPs.

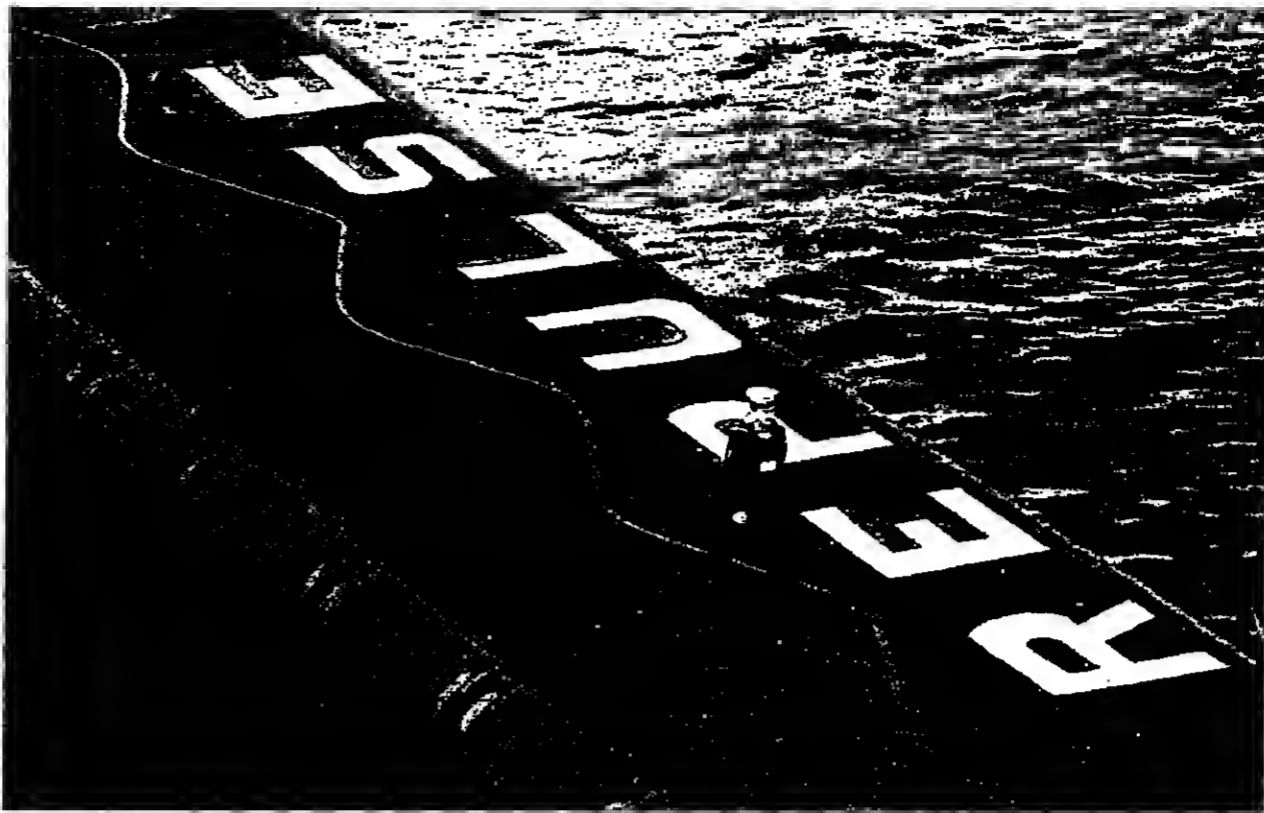
Sir Leslie wrote: "I feel very strongly that for Manchester United to be seen promoting a product of this sort sends out

completely the wrong message to the large number of children who follow the team and idolise the players." It reinforced the link between football and alcohol, "which is unfortunately all too prevalent in our society".

Martin Edwards, chairman of the club, which generates £23 million a year from marketing, had replied: "We do not believe that the criticism of our involvement with whisky is justified when one considers that there are literally hundreds of brands on the market. We do not sell the whisky in our store or, indeed, any alcoholic products. We do take our responsibilities to the public very seriously."

Ken Ramsden, United's assistant secretary, said: "We think Sir Leslie is well-intentioned, but he has gone too far and picked the wrong target. The problem of alcohol abuse among young people already exists. I don't believe we are adding to it."

Football, pages 50-52



A crewman on the deck of the HMS Repulse yesterday as the nuclear submarine left Faslane

Redundant nuclear warrior sails into history

THE last Polaris ballistic missile submarine to be decommissioned was taken on her final journey yesterday (Michael Evans writes). HMS Repulse, which was officially decommissioned last week in a ceremony attended by John Major at the Faslane naval base on the Clyde, will

have her nuclear fuel rods and other radioactive parts removed before being moored alongside the three other Polaris boats at Rosyth. The four boats represent Britain's strategic nuclear deterrent for nearly 30 years. They will remain at Rosyth until a decision is taken about a

long-term storage site. Britain's new nuclear deterrent, Trident, is an American-made submarine-launched ballistic missile system. It is carried by two Vanguard class nuclear-powered submarines which will be joined by two more by the end of the decade.

THE SUNDAY TIMES
RAVE ON



Savour the moment: Buddy Holly in Wigan, walking the well-bred Lancashire lass down the unmade lane to her front-gate, giving her a chaste goodnight kiss, then returning past cobbled streets of dark factory chimneys and back-to-back houses, still "looking for someone to love"

Philip Norman, rock 'n' roll's foremost biographer, on Buddy Holly

Exclusive in THE SUNDAY TIMES tomorrow

Urban nightmare becomes dream estate of future

By IAN MURRAY, COMMUNITY CORRESPONDENT

THE first families moved into a housing estate designed for the 21st century yesterday. It was built on the site of one of Europe's worst 1960s high-rise urban jungles.

With turfed roofs, shredded newspaper insulation in the walls and recycled lavatories in the bathrooms, the 50-flat "Homes for Change" block at Hulme, the run-down Manchester suburb, has been designed to the tenants' own specifications. The block, which has job-creating workshops at ground level, is the centre of a £70 million urban redevelopment replacing the huge crescent-shaped flats that were notorious for vandalism and mugging.

Charlie Baker, the last tenant to move out of the Crescents before they were pulled down in 1993, is a founder member of the co-operative set up to build the £4 million community venture. "Even though the Crescents were terrible, some of us felt there was the basis of a real urban community there if we could only provide a good environment," he said. As the bulldozers flattened the old blocks, 18 families formed a group to design their ideal home.

With guidance from a

Manchester firm of architects — Mills, Beaumont, Levey, Channon — the group worked throughout 1993. For security reasons, they opted for a building round a courtyard, with access possible only through gates controlled by the residents or tenants of the workshops on the two lower floors. The design has already won a security award from Manchester Police.

"Everyone knows everyone else so if we see people we don't know sneaking around it is easy for us to confront them," Mr Baker said. "It all helps build a community spirit."

The block has been built from aggregate made with fuel ash from power stations and rubble from the Crescents. There is no plywood or chipboard and all timber is from sustainable Swedish forests. The lavatories were rescued from the demolition site, scrubbed down and fitted in the new flats. Grass grown on the stepped terraces provides roof insulation for the flats below and a safe play area for children. The insulation is so efficient that only the smallest radiators are needed and heating bills are expected to be no more than £1 a week.



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WORLD OFFERS

Five contenders for Preacher of the Year include former primary teacher

Finalists line up for last word in sermons

By RUTH GLEDHILL AND ESTHER FOREMAN

FIVE preachers have been chosen to compete in the final of the Preacher of the Year award, sponsored by *The Times* and organised by the College of Preachers.

The five, who defeated more than 250 preachers, include one woman, Anne Peat, a former primary school teacher who is a lay preacher in her local Church of England and Methodist churches. She will preach in next month's final with Fr William Anderson, a Roman Catholic priest; the Rev Christopher Burken, from Cheshire; the Rev Bernard Thomas, a Welsh-speaking Anglican clergyman with the Church in Wales; and Dr Arnold Kellett, at 70 the oldest finalist, a layman who was twice mayor of his home town, Knaresborough in North Yorkshire.

Judges will include the Right Rev Michael Turnbull, Bishop of Durham and chairman of council of the College of Preachers; Sir Ludovic Kennedy, the celebrated author and atheist; and John Gummer, the Environment Secretary.

Mr Gummer, who with Sir Ludovic helped to judge last year's final, said: "I will be looking for a preacher who uses the pulpit to give a message in a way which cannot be communicated in any other way. I will also look for a preacher who can give me a new insight into a



Dr Arnold Kellett, head of modern languages at King James's school, Knaresborough, until 1983, became a Methodist preacher in 1953. Married with four children and 14 grandchildren, he served in the army intelligence corps, spending two years in the Far East. He believes religion is "not taught but caught" and that all people, especially children, learn by example and conviction. Dr Kellett is about to publish *Et By Gum, Lord*, a version of the gospels in Yorkshire dialect.



The Rev Bernard Thomas, 50, married with three children, cares for a remote, hilltop community in the South Wales valleys. A local historian, he grew up in a parish served by good preachers and felt that nothing less than to become one himself would satisfy him. He describes himself as "blessed with a loud voice" and believes that, in places, the standard of preaching has dropped. "People are being short-changed if they only have five minutes," he said. "You mustn't be above people."



Anne Peat, 48, married with two adult sons, decided ten years ago to become a lay reader in the Church of England after helping her vicar to write his sermons. She has never sought ordination, believing that, as a lay person, she has a vocation to preach from her experiences of living. She believes that sermons should comfort the disturbed and disturb the comfortable. "People should not see going to church as an escape but as something that equips them to cope with the world."



Fr William Anderson, 65, the only Roman Catholic to make the shortlist, is a canon at St Mary's Cathedral, Aberdeen. A graduate of Aberdeen and Cambridge, he studied for the priesthood in Rome and has worked for the BBC's religious affairs department. He said: "I often try to weave a degree of poetry into my sermons and draw conclusions from it." He said preaching "must become tailored to the times we live in"; the attention span of congregations was shorter and the style had to be brief and pointed.



The Rev Christopher Burken, 44, vicar of St Mary Whitegate and St Peter Little Budworth, Cheshire, is married with three young daughters. He started preaching occasionally as a teenager to help the hard-pressed local vicar. He also sometimes preached at Warwick University and edits the international prayer journal *Encounter*. He believes sermons help to bridge the gap between God and day-to-day life. Sermons are "glimpses of the eternal in ordinary, everyday circumstances".

familiar passage of scripture, an insight which suddenly illuminates it for me."

The five were chosen from a shortlist of 30 after assessors from the College of Preachers visited them in their churches and chapels to hear them preach. The 30 were whittled down from the 250-plus entries after they submitted written texts of sermons they had preached. Bishop Turnbull

said the finalists represented a good cross-section of denominations and geography.

On the judging, he said: "I would want to learn from a sermon. I want explanation, to be enlightened. I want some help in seeing the relevance of the information for me and the social and world environment in which I operate. I also want inspiration, something that stirs my imagination and gives me

courage to explore. I want exhortation, something that challenges my will. Finally, I want to see conviction that the sermon is a high point of worship."

The five will compete for the title during a service of prayer, worship and meditation at Southwark Cathedral on October 30 at 2pm. Each will be invited to address a separate text from the psalms. To coincide with the final the 30 shortlisted sermons will be

published in the second *Times Book of Best Sermons* (Cassell, £9.99).

The winner will be presented with a specially commissioned sculpture, a bronze of a dove by the Chelsea sculptor Ros Tracey. All are welcome to attend the final at Southwark Cathedral. Entrance is free.

Reluctant Runcie, Weekend, page 1
At your service, Weekend, page 15

Credo

Understanding life is a game of two halves

Rev David Wilbourne

Are we often in two minds about something? Behind that hackneyed phrase is a physiological and even spiritual question worth investigation.

At the risk of over-simplification, it is all down to the brain's two hemispheres. Each and every personality is composite, consisting of dynamic interaction between two sides of the brain. Personality fragmentation takes place when the interaction is destructive, rather than constructive, or when the cord connecting the two hemispheres is severed — an alarming side-effect to what was initially considered a cure for epilepsy. It seems, therefore, that unitary personality is both a false goal and a false god.

Another unitary theme the churches are currently embracing on is their annual harvest festival, celebrating harmony in creation. That belies a reality where natural and political order seem anything but harmonious. The Middle East and Ireland, to take two examples, present all the hallmarks of a fragmented personality. Yet those who look towards healing need not be afraid of a continuing dynamic tension, as if conformity and uniformity were the only essence of peace. For if such tension is the *sine qua non* of personality, then it may be the same necessary ingredient elsewhere.

There may be similarly false expectations of wholeness which undermine modern marriage, as if harmonious calm was the only criterion for a successful partnership. And what of the Church, by schisms rent asunder? Again, is tension all bad? Can, for

instance, the debate and division over the ordination of women be seen as a sign of life, of a development of a personality which subsists in two integrities, rather than as a sign of doom?

The Church is not helped by repeated bouts of golden-ageitis, looking back to an origin of one faith, one Church, one Lord. Yet this age never was. The New Testament testifies to a plethora of controversies. Christianity was forged in a crucible of warring factions. The tension was not the problem. Cutting the cord was, as each sect retreated to its ecclesiastical ghetto and fired broadsides against heterodoxy. Yet those who cut the cord and effectively wall themselves in should bear in mind who precisely remains without the city wall.

The Trinity is a healthy sign of a divine personality in dynamic tension and interaction. Dualism is refusing to see both light and darkness within the one God, projecting his dark side onto a convenient devil. But the side-effects of this tempting solution make for a schizophrenic faith and paranoid world, with God's ultimate victory by no means a foregone conclusion.

If man really is made in God's image, then how the brain works may offer insights into the very working of God and creation itself. Makes you think twice, doesn't it? Or at least one thought for each hemisphere.

□ The Rev David Wilbourne is Domestic Chaplain to the Archbishop of York and Diocesan Director of Ordinands.

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Government must pay for asylum crisis, Hume says

MINISTERS must provide extra funding to voluntary groups faced with a "humanitarian crisis" as a result of the Government's policy on asylum-seekers, Cardinal Basil Hume said yesterday. Social security benefits have been cut for most people seeking asylum. The Archbishop of Westminster, speaking at the opening of a London night shelter for homeless asylum-seekers, said: "The

Government has a moral responsibility to provide financial support to those voluntary organisations taking the strain. The humanitarian demands they are faced with have become so much more acute as a direct consequence of government policy." The centre, run by the Refugee Council and the Westminster diocese, saw up to 80 people a day who were "literally destitute" he said.

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Coins in mint condition went down with mail steamer in the Bay of Biscay

Golden treasure from shipwreck to fetch £1.5m

By DALYA ALBERGE
ARTS CORRESPONDENT

A SPECTACULAR haul of coins recovered from the wreck of a Royal Mail steamer that sank in 1882 is to be auctioned next month.

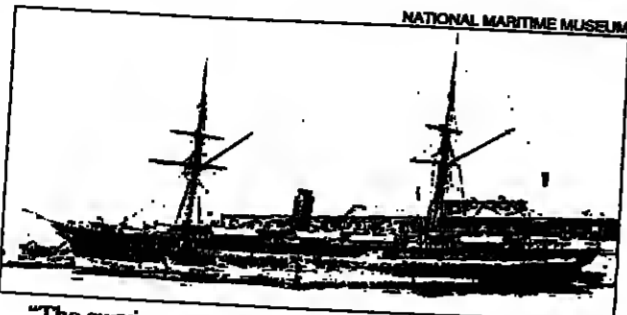
More than 10,000 gold sovereigns were recovered from the rusting hull of the *RMS Douro*, an elegant ship that foundered off Cape Finisterre after colliding with a Spanish liner. The treasure has been valued at £1.5 million and is to be sold in London by Spink's in November.

The *Douro* was coming to the end of a 10,000-mile voyage to Southampton from the trading ports in Brazil. Laden with coffee, diamonds and gold, it was within two days of home when, on a clear evening with a full moon, she collided with the *Yuroc* boat. Seventeen people on the *Douro* lost their lives and a further 30 were killed on the Spanish ship.

According to *The Times* of April 5, 1882, the *Douro* was badly damaged and sank within 30 minutes, stern first. Forty-nine passengers and 60 crew survived and were picked up by another British steamer, but "the mails, specie [coins], baggage and everything else were lost".

Crucial time was lost in the sinking as the lifeboats jammed in their davits. The rowlocks could not be found and it was discovered that the passengers were sitting on the bars. Plugs were missing from boats and passengers had to bail out water.

The search for the *Douro's* treasure began in 1949, when Nigel Pickford, 49, from south London, found a note in his father's diary. It consisted of just six words: "Douro, 1882, £3,000, Bay of Biscay". His father, Thomas, had started working in shipwreck research in 1945 and had located dozens of wrecks; together, they salvaged more than £100 million of lost cargoes. His



"The survivors are completely destitute": The *Douro* and the report on the sinking from *The Times*

THE TIMES, APRIL 5, 1882.
THE LOSS OF THE DOURO.

(FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT)

MADRID, APRIL 3. I have just received the following telegram from a trustworthy correspondent in Corunna referring to the collision between the Royal Mail steamer *Douro* and the Spanish steamer *Yuroc* Bat:—

"On Saturday night the weather was clear. A large hole was made amidships of the *Douro*. The boats were immediately cleared away, but the *Douro* sank in 30 minutes. Forty-nine passengers and 60 of the crew escaped in the boats, and were picked up by the British steamer *Hidalgo*, which landed them at Corunna. The mails, specie, baggage, and everything else were lost. The survivors are completely destitute, many being only half clothed. Messrs. Tall and Schwind, Commandador Camara, and Lady Beecher's maid are missing, also the captain and four officers, the purser, and chief engineer; but the total number is uncertain. The

father had not pursued the *Douro* because, in the 1940s, the 1,500ft depth of the wreck was considered too great.

About 30 years after finding the note, Mr Pickford decided to develop the project. It took some ten years of research, delving into old newspapers, log books, Lloyd's Registers and ships' drawings. By 1992 he and the Swedish marine salvage specialist Sverker Hallstrom had narrowed the wreck site to 150 square miles.

But finding the *Douro* proved difficult: there were no drawings of it, the search area contained many other under-

watered wrecks from the Victorian steamship era and, at that time, a cargo of gold had never been recovered from inside a collapsed and rusting iron hull in such deep water.

The team worked with the aid of sonar scanning and a hydro-acoustic referencing system, from detailed surveys put together by Mr Pickford and Mr Hallstrom. After painstaking manoeuvres and a last-minute false alarm, the wreck site was found — and confirmed when a porcelain plate was dragged from the mud. On it was painted the once famous Royal Mail insigni-

nia of a seahorse, confirming the wreck was the *Douro*. The *Deepsea Worker*, a powerful drill ship from an international salvage company, arrived on the scene. The treasure was found and brought to the surface in 1995 and then the team had to wait a year and a day to ensure that there were no claims on it. They managed to trace some of the owners, primarily banks, who will take a share of the proceeds.

The cargo includes 28,000 coins, among them 10,000 gold sovereigns, all in excellent condition. Mark Rasmusen of Spink said that most significant item was a 1,600 reis coin from 1780s colonial Brazil.

Most of the sovereigns date from Queen Victoria's reign. Some show a portrait of the young Queen by William Wyon and others bear the St George and the Dragon design used under George III. Also of interest are coins made in Australia, which the ship had just collected from a bank in Lisbon. They are said to be in mint condition, having never made it into circulation.

Among other items retrieved from the wreck are china cups, bowls and plates, all bearing the ship's insignia, two brass portholes and a pair of brass dolphins.

Mr Pickford said he never doubted that he would find the steamer and recover the cargo, although at many times the operation had been frustrating. "You can never be 100 per cent sure in this business, but I thought we had a very good chance of finding it and identifying it."

Mr Hallstrom said: "The biggest moment for me was when I actually knew it was the right ship. That was more exciting to me than when the gold came up."

The treasure will be on public view at Christie's Ryder Street Rooms, London, from November 10 to 16 and on November 18, before the auction on November 20 and 21.



Mint condition: Sverker Hallstrom, who helped to find the *Douro*, with some of the 10,000 mostly Victorian gold sovereigns found among a haul of 28,000 coins

NEWS IN BRIEF

Eton chef escapes jail over fraud

An Eton College chef who admitted trying to pass forged £10 notes escaped jail after the school gave him a glowing reference and said he could keep his job if he did not go to prison. Police found 124 other forged notes at the flat in Eton of Dominic Brookes, 23, head chef of Walpole House. Winchester Crown Court ordered him to do 240 hours' community service and pay £350 costs.

Stepfather held

Nigel Rawlings, 33, of Uppingham, Leicestershire, was remanded in custody by magistrates at Melton Mowbray, charged with the murder of his 14-year-old stepdaughter, Sarah Bottomley.

Flying support

Pilots, engineers and ground crew from the Army Air Corps stationed at Dishforth, North Yorkshire, will man Green Goddess fire engines today as striking Derbyshire firefighters begin a fourth month of industrial action.

War pilot buried

A Canadian-born Spitfire pilot was buried in Adegem Canadian military cemetery, Belgium, more than 50 years after his plane crashed. The remains of Squadron Leader George Reid were identified in wreckage at Maldegem.

Rover ticket

A stray alsatian lost in the London Underground system for four days after wandering onto the Northern line near Camden Town, north London, has emerged safe, four stops south at Tottenham Court Road.

Dogged tripper

A holidaymaker's Jack Russell terrier trapped for 20 days down a rabbit hole in sand dunes at Dunstan Hill, Northumberland, was found exhausted on the beach after apparently eating its way out through the sand.

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Within 17 months of launch, Virgin's no nonsense financial revolution had attracted over 70,000 savers looking for a well-balanced, conservative approach to stock market investment rather than chancing the thrills and spills of a speculative investment strategy.

3. Simplicity
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Virgin's strategy is completely straightforward. It doesn't rely on costly, fallible fund managers attempting to guess which shares will perform best. The Virgin Direct PEP tracks the FT-SE Actuaries All-Share Index, which covers more than 900 of the largest companies in the London Stock Exchange.

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US airstrikes against Iraq expose allies' divisions over foreign policy

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN BRUSSELS

EUROPE

DISARRAY in Europe over the American airstrikes in Iraq has offered fresh proof of the European Union's inability to speak with a single diplomatic voice just as ministers meet today in Ireland to try to live up to the ambition. Officials from the smaller EU states and the Commission are lamenting the sorry picture of

Europe again fumbling the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) which it devised at Maastricht. Since France opposed President Clinton's missile attacks, Spain and Italy voiced reservations and Germany gave lukewarm support. It was not surprising that Britain failed in an attempt in Brussels last Tuesday to

organise a common EU statement of support for Washington. The Union has repeatedly failed to rise to the occasion on foreign policy, from its inability to act over the conflict in former Yugoslavia to the need for American intervention to stop a threatened war between Greece and Turkey early this year. At the foreign ministers' meeting today and tomorrow in Tralee, County Kerry, Klaus Kinkel, the

German Foreign Minister, and his federal-minded allies are likely to use the differences over the American strikes as a lesson on the need for revamping the EU's machinery in the revised version of the Maastricht treaty. A big group of member states believes that Europe will endow itself with diplomatic weight to match its status as an economic superpower only when its members agree to a measure of majority

decision-making. There is wide support for mechanisms to ensure more harmony, including a dilution of the national veto. A number of EU states also back the idea of a shared Euro-seat on the United Nations Security Council, something that does not enjoy support from France and Britain, the two EU members who have permanent seats. Britain is supporting plans to beef up the EU's diplomatic clout

with a new planning team in Brussels, but it argues that foreign policy by majority is an unworkable exercise. Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, constantly tells his EU colleagues: "The CFSP will only carry weight internationally if it represents a genuinely common policy." President Chirac, who also wants to retain the veto in foreign policy, has just added fuel to the British argument with his stand on

Iraq. Germany's increasing tendency to flex its own diplomatic muscles, especially towards Russia and Eastern Europe, also raises questions about its will to defer to the majority. The imminence of the British election is widely blamed as the main obstruction to progress, but the talks are also being diverted by manoeuvring over the much more momentous and difficult project of economic and monetary union.

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Iraqi troops quit Arbil but remain poised to strike

Andrew Finkel, outside Arbil in northern Iraq, watches Iraqi troops dig in, apparently preparing for a long stay in what was once a Saddam-free zone



Members of Massoud Barzani's KDP stand armed in their trenches near Sulaimaniya

AMERICAN airstrikes in Iraq may have put pressure on President Saddam Hussein's forces to withdraw from the city of Arbil, but those troops have not gone very far.

In Koshkapa, less than ten miles south of Arbil, what appeared to be an entire Iraqi battalion was setting in yesterday in positions scattered on either side of the road, apparently preparing for the long haul.

Bulldozers were building defences for TSS Russian-made tanks and about a hundred armoured personnel carriers. Iraqi army officers were also manning the two checkpoints that we managed to negotiate at the turn-off at Koshkapa for the Sulaimaniya road.

After five years of being excluded from the north of its own country, the Iraqi Government is back. It can thank disunity between the Kurdish partners—the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) and the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP)—for being allowed to regain a foothold in an area which is meant to be a Saddam-free zone.

Yet the Iraqi leader has now installed his forces at the request of the people he once terrorised and oppressed. It was the KDP led by Massoud Barzani which invited in government forces to help to bring to an end the PUK's control of the city of Arbil, which once served as the capital of an Iraqi Kurdish administration set up by the two parties.

Speaking in his nearby headquarters in Salahuddin this week, Mr Barzani accused

the PUK of siding with Iran to destroy his followers. He also accused the rest of the world of standing idly by. While he may have been forced to call for Saddam's help, he appeared unrepentant about his choice. Mr Barzani described the lifting of what he described as a PUK-Iranian threat as a "great achievement" by the Iraqi Government. "A great barrier has been lifted between Iraq and us," he said.

Yet many now question whether Mr Barzani possesses a spoon long enough to sup with the Iraqi leader. As far as one can tell, Saddam's troops have left Arbil. Although the troops now digging into the countryside beyond the city appear to be regular soldiers rather than members of the Republican Guard, nobody doubts the ability of the Iraqis to return to the city if they wish to do so.



For now the Iraqi artillery is pointing the other way, towards the front lines of the PUK, further down the highway. There are no armoured vehicles here, just a few buses and battered coaches to ferry the peshmergas (fighters) to their positions. They are commanded by Kosrev Rasul Ali, who was until last Saturday's attack on Arbil the prime minister of a Kurdish parliament. His office in the parliament building has been destroyed by Iraqi artillery. He now wears the baggy battle fatigues of a fighter.

According to the leader of the Kurdish parliament, the KDP launched dawn attacks on Thursday at about five places around Koshkapa and were relying on the Iraqis to safeguard the rear position. His remarks were confirmed by the smoke of artillery fire rising from the surrounding hills.

What the KDP intends is not clear. One explanation is that they are trying to maintain pressure on the PUK if only to persuade them to restore electricity to Arbil. The absence of power also means it is impossible to pump water to a city with an estimated population of 700,000 persons. The generating stations are near Sulaimaniya at Lake Dukan and are under PUK control.

The main reason for the absence of electricity is damage to power lines during last Saturday's fighting in the city. The United Nations has been brokering co-operation between Kurds on both sides. Jalal Talabani, the leader of

the PUK, pledged during an interview in his mountain headquarters at Kale Chawalan above Sulaimaniya, that he would do his best to restore electricity "to our people". There is still some suspicion among local aid

workers that Mr Talabani may be reluctant to surrender such a powerful position. Life inside Sulaimaniya appeared to be calm, despite reports, denied by UN officials, that the city had come under Iraqi bombardment.

Britain gives up bid for UN unity against Saddam

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK AND TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

DIPLOMACY

BRITAIN last night abandoned its effort to get the United Nations Security Council to criticise Iraq, after determined opposition from Russia.

The British decision, after three days of negotiation, marked the collapse of unity in the 15-nation council on the protection of the Kurds in northern Iraq and was a diplomatic humiliation for the British delegation.

"Consideration of a resolution on Iraq has ceased because the British have said, while their text remains on the table, that they have ceased consultation on it," said Madeleine Albright, Washington's UN Ambassador.

The original British draft, tabled on Tuesday, condemned Iraq and demanded that its troops returned to the positions they held on August 15, before the assault. Russia strongly criticised the British proposal and presented its own draft that included an implicit criticism of America for launching missile attacks without UN approval.

Britain flirted with the idea of forcing a vote on its resolution, and tabled it briefly yesterday before withdrawing it and abandoning its attempt. The proposal was also being resisted by France and China, both of which are also veto-bearing permanent members of the Security Council.

America, meanwhile, maintaining its capability to renew airstrikes against President Saddam Hussein, claimed yesterday that he was withdrawing most troops from northern Iraq but had left

behind a vast network of spies and secret agents to police the Kurdish enclaves.

US intelligence reported that the majority of troops, tanks and armoured personnel carriers the Iraqi leader had sent to Arbil were returning to the south, although some infantry units remained behind. Officials in the State Department said Saddam had left "a massive security presence" thought to be "big enough to terrorise any opposition in the region."

"He did not simply vanish into the night in a benign fashion, leaving nothing behind," said Glyn Davies, of the State Department. "Saddam Hussein's footprint remains very much indelibly placed over that region of northern Iraq."

William Perry, the Defence Secretary, said that while intelligence reports showed a movement back to barracks by Iraqi forces, some infantry remained in Arbil. Iraq has so far respected the expanded no-fly zone across the southern half of the country and the Pentagon said nearly all Iraqi aircraft had been pulled out of the area between the 32nd and 33rd parallels.

American officials said a failure to remove all Iraqi forces from northern Iraq would not provoke further attacks despite reports from at least one Kurdish group that Iraqi soldiers were involved in factional fighting. "We're reserving the right to go back again if we need to," Mr Perry said. "That will depend very much on the Iraqi reaction. If they threaten our airplanes, then they will be inviting additional problems."

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Court ruling stalls post-apartheid constitutional law

FROM INIGO GILMORE IN JOHANNESBURG

SOUTH AFRICA'S Constitutional Court yesterday rejected sections of the post-apartheid Constitution in a move which could open the way for a new round of wrangling over its provisions.

Judge Arthur Chaskalson, the court president, hailed the Constitution, passed by parliament earlier this year after two years of tough negotiations, but said several areas of the 140-page document did not accord with all 34 constitutional principles laid out in the interim law drafted during multiparty talks to end apartheid.

The court's ruling amounted to a rejection of certain complex compromises reached between the African National Congress, the National Party and other groups that have provided for a unitary government.

In May the Constitutional Assembly, comprising both Houses of Parliament, adopted the new Constitution which, in the words of its chief negotiator, was "the birth certificate" of the rainbow nation. Approval was secured only after a last-minute agreement between the ANC and the former ruling National Party on key education, labour and property clauses.

F. W. de Klerk, the National Party leader, told parliament he was dissatisfied with aspects of the final draft and his support was motivated partly by the fact that a "no" vote would have forced the country

into a damaging referendum. The court rejected the proposed blueprint for permanent democracy in South Africa because it found fault with the reduction of provincial powers, the failure to entrench agreed fundamental rights and lack of protection for human rights watchdogs, including a public protector and auditor-general.

This means negotiators will have to look again at the legislative and fiscal autonomy of South Africa's nine provinces which provided a main sticking point during the two years of talks.

Last night, President Mandela's office welcomed the court ruling and said he did not anticipate any undue problems.

The ANC, National Party and Democratic Party pledged yesterday to renegotiate only the provisions rejected by the Constitutional Court. The Inkatha Freedom Party said it would comment after its national council had studied the ruling in detail.

Legal experts are confident that the problems are technical rather than fundamental, but there is no guarantee that political agendas will not creep back into the negotiations. No final agreement after three months raises the prospect of a referendum.

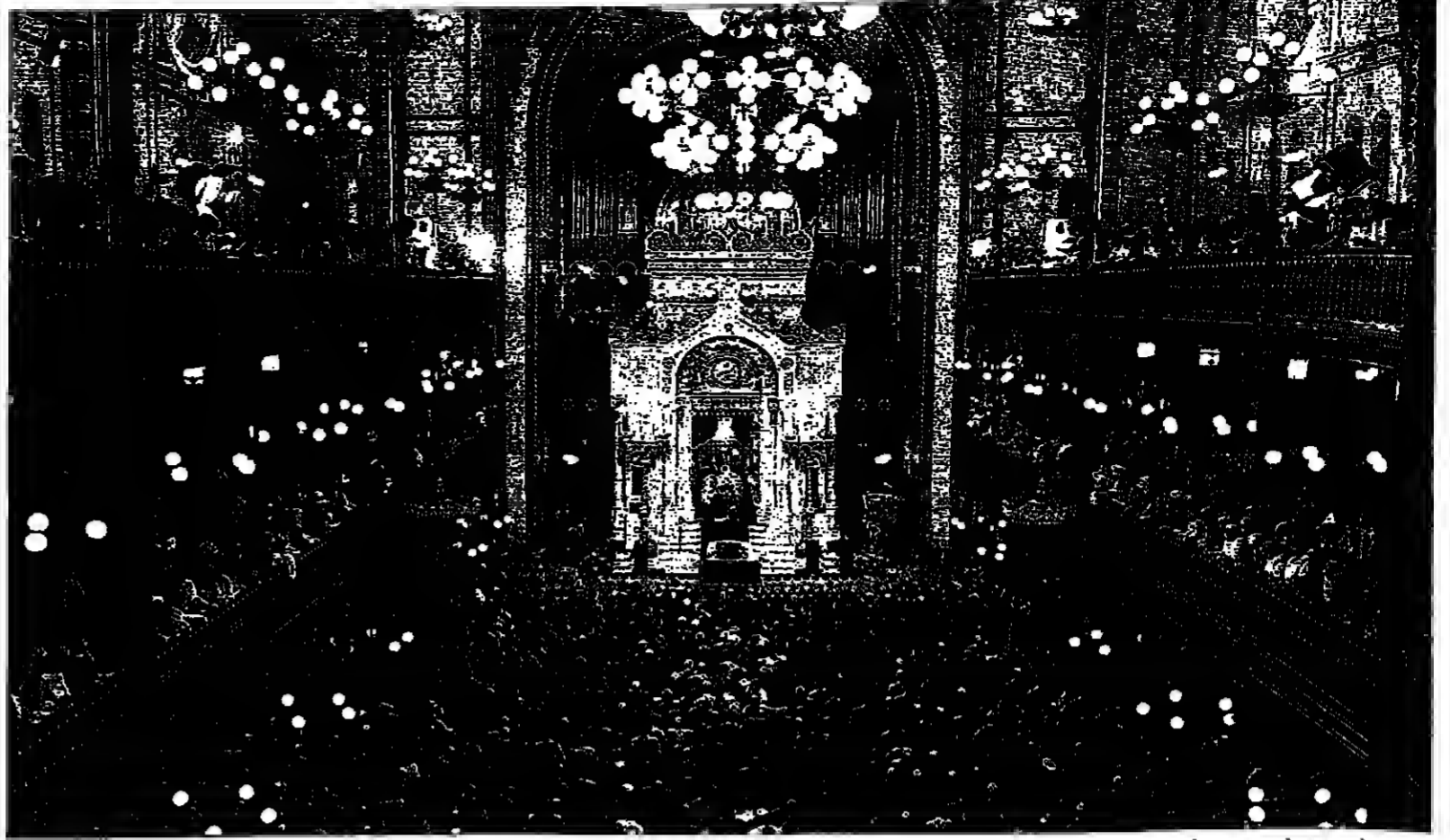
A row over provincial powers led Chief Mangosuthu Buthezi's federalist Inkatha Freedom Party to walk out of talks last year and yesterday's

judgment creates an opportunity for the Inkatha to return to the negotiating table. Observers believe that if the views of the staunchly federalist Inkatha can be incorporated it will underpin the legitimacy and credibility of the final Constitution.

The court threw out the constitution for Kwa-Zulu/Natal province, controlled by Inkatha, saying that it gave powers to the provincial legislature above and beyond those allotted in the interim constitution. It also rejected an attempt to make the provision of a Labour Relations Act, which redefined labour law after the transition to democracy.

The ruling affects a trade-off between business and labour in which they had agreed that the Labour Act would protect employers' rights to lock-out and the new Constitution would protect workers' right to strike. During negotiations the National Party reluctantly accepted a labour relations clause that failed to guarantee the rights of business and industry to protect themselves from strikes by locking out workers.

Mr Mandela has ruled out the death penalty in South Africa despite growing calls for it to be brought back as part of efforts to deal with soaring crime rates. Mr Mandela's view was announced by Desmond Tutu, the Anglican Archbishop. (AFP)



Thousands of people, including concentration camp survivors, in Budapest's Great Synagogue, the largest in Europe, at the reopening service

Tears of joy as Budapest synagogue reopens

FROM ADAM LEBOR IN BUDAPEST

MORE than 50 years after the Holocaust that cost the lives of 600,000 Hungarian Jews, the sound of the shofar (ram's horn) resounded across Budapest's Great Synagogue in a celebration of the reopening of Europe's biggest Jewish prayer house.

But for Hungary's 100,000-strong Jewish community, the biggest in Eastern Europe, the shofar heralded more than the restoration of the court-

ney's most important synagogue. The ceremony, on Thursday evening, was an affirmation of the rebirth of Jewish culture in Hungary, and a statement that the country's Jewish community is slowly rebuilding after the terrors of Nazism and the oppression of communism.

Seven thousand people, including concentration camp survivors, President Goncz of Hungary, Yitzhak Shamir, the former Israeli Prime Minister, Christian priests and thousands of Jews, jammed

into the 19th-century building. "It's wonderful. This happens only once in a person's lifetime," said Kalman Varsi, 72, a labour camp survivor. Tears streamed down his face as he stood in the synagogue for the 2½-hour service. "Something unexpected and extraordinary has happened."

"Now Hungarian Jews have their own important historical monument in the heart of the city, and they no longer have to feel like second-class citizens," said Rabbi Baruch Oberlander, of the

Lubavitch movement. "It is a symbol of the revival of Jewish culture and a focal point for Jewish life, and it is happening together with the Jewish schools that are teaching both children and adults about their heritage."

The revival of Jewish culture is being spearheaded by the young, who do not share their parents' legacy of fear about public displays of their heritage. Just a few years ago, to wear a Star of David in public would have been a brave gesture. Now it is a

common sight to see young Jews wearing Hebrew-language T-shirts and skull caps across the city's nightspots and crowding the courtyard of the Great Synagogue on Friday nights after Sabbath services.

The 137-year-old synagogue, which was on the edge of the Jewish ghetto under the Nazis, was hit by 27 bombs during the Second World War. Rebuilding has cost 135 billion forints (£5.7 million), 80 per cent of it donated by the Hungarian Government.

Rommel piano up for auction in Israel

FROM ROSS DUNN IN JERUSALEM

AUCTIONEERS in Israel are hoping that a legendary piano, retrieved by British soldiers after the defeat of Rommel, will fetch at least £400,000 today.

The Siena piano was designed by Sebastiano Marchisio, an Italian master harpsichord maker, and completed by his grandsons in 1825, after his death. They discovered that Marchisio had invented a unique instrument which sounded like something between a harpsichord and a piano and had taken the secret with him

to the grave. According to legend, the sounding board was made from the pillars of a collapsed church, which had been built from wood taken from Solomon's temple in Jerusalem.

The piano turned up in El Alamein during the Second World War, where it had apparently been taken to entertain German troops. British soldiers found the piano encased in plaster to protect its intricate wood carvings, including cherubs, gargoyles, birds and animals.

It was shipped to Palestine, where it was stored in a warehouse before being sold for £3 to Avner Carmi, a piano tuner.

After being restored, the piano attracted the attentions of Artur Rubinstein and Leonard Bernstein, who reportedly marvelled at its sound.

After his death, Carmi's three daughters are selling the piano. One of them, Zaira Borochovitch, said her father was obsessed with the instrument. "Any money he had went to the care and cleaning of it," she said.

Tirana: The Albanian Parliament has ratified an agreement for the return of \$18 million of gold looted by the Nazis and held since the Second World War in Britain. (Reuters)

School blast kills woman

Lisboa: A woman was killed and five people were injured, three of them seriously, in an explosion yesterday at a primary school in central Portugal. Officials in Funchal, 125 miles northeast of here, said the blast appeared to have been caused by a bomb. Jose Soares, a town councillor, said that the explosion had caused extensive damage to the ground floor of the school. (Reuters)

Dubrovnik rocked by quake

BY EVE-ANN PRENTICE

AN EARTHQUAKE left at least one town badly damaged and caused tremors felt from Dubrovnik in Croatia to Sarajevo and Mostar in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The earthquake was centred near the coastal town of Ston, about 25 miles north of Dubrovnik, and last night residents were facing a second night sleeping outside after many of the town's buildings

were destroyed on Thursday night.

There were aftershocks throughout the region yesterday. In Dubrovnik, which is trying to rebuild its reputation as a tourist centre, a spokeswoman for the United Nations said: "People are very uneasy; there was no panic but strong tremors were felt."

Rock slides closed the main road between Ston and Dubrovnik, but there were no reports of significant damage

in Dubrovnik, known as "the Pearl of the Adriatic". The tremor measured 6.0 on the Richter scale and initial reports indicated that about 80 per cent of the stone houses in the medieval centre of Ston were seriously damaged.

The quake was also felt on the Dalmatian islands of Brač and Hvar to the north and inland at Imotski and Sinj. Buildings were also shaken in Makarska, a coastal town 100 miles north of Dubrovnik.

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CHANGING TIMES

Clinton...
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US fears...
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THE PAGE

Clinton poll lead undented by new aide sex scandal

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

DICK MORRIS, Bill Clinton's disgraced political guru, was hit by a second sex scandal yesterday, but his downfall appears to have inflicted little political damage on the President, and Bob Dole's campaign was the one in patent disarray.

Three new polls showed the 73-year-old Republican trailing by between 14 and 17 points with just 61 days left, and in desperation he replaced his two senior media strategists with a team renowned for hard-hitting negative advertisements.

Mr Morris, who engineered Mr Clinton's political revival and orchestrated his "family value" crusade, resigned on the eve of the President's Democratic convention speech last Thursday after tabloid reports that he had a steamy year-long affair with a prostitute. The same tabloids yesterday revealed that Mr Morris, a married man, had also been having a 15-year affair with Barbara Pfafflin, 40, a Texas by whom he has a six-year-old daughter. "New Dick Morris Bombshell: The Other, Other Woman" proclaimed the front-page headline in the *New York Post*.

Mr Morris reportedly met Ms Pfafflin while working on a political campaign in Texas and she, like the prostitute, visited him in Washington's

exclusive Jefferson Hotel where he stayed while advising the President.

Mr Morris has refused to comment on any of the tabloid reports and appears utterly unshaken. He has signed a \$2 million (£1.28 million) book deal with the New York publishers, Random House, and has reportedly approached CBS Television about working as an election consultant.

White House officials are angry about the book, and worried it will embarrass the President, but more than 80 per cent of respondents in yesterday's *Washington Post* and *New York Times* polls said that their opinion of Mr Clinton was unaffected by Mr Morris's resignation.

This week's Iraqi crisis has helped divert attention and the two polls registered 69 per cent and 76 per cent approval of Mr Clinton's decision to order missile strikes. But the really alarming figures for Mr Dole were those showing surging economic optimism.

His campaign's centrepiece is his promise of huge tax cuts to stimulate economic growth, but such a radical change in policy has little appeal when 72 per cent believe that the economy is good — the highest figure since 1988 — and by 2-1 Americans feel better off than when Mr Clinton took office. Mr Dole was grounded by

Hurricane Fran yesterday, but Mr Clinton campaigned in Florida, a state no Democrat has won in 20 years, and was able to announce America's lowest unemployment figures in seven years.

Mr Dole replaced Mike Murphy and Don Sipple with an aggressive new three-man media team headed by Alex Castellanos, a veteran best known for an infamous race-baiting advertisement that helped Jesse Helms, the North Carolina senator, beat off a strong black challenger in 1990. Paul Manafort, the consultant who organised last month's Republican convention, is being bought in to coordinate the overall message.

One problem has been that neither Mr Sipple nor Mr Murphy had faith in Mr Dole's tax-cutting plan. But whether the new team can produce a coherent new advertising strategy in the little time left is questionable.



Onlookers pass debris left by the hurricane at Wrightsville Beach, North Carolina

Eleven killed as Hurricane Fran hits Carolinas

BY QUENTIN LETTS

AT LEAST 11 people were killed and coastal townships were left in tatters after Hurricane Fran ripped through North and South Carolina. Severe flooding was reported in low-lying areas after storm surges accompanied the 115mph winds. The hurricane hit land at Cape Fear, North Carolina, and residents who ignored evacuation orders suffered a terrifying experience. Pleasure boats, picked up by the gusts, flew through the air. Mature trees snapped like toothpicks, and tornados spawned by the hurricane tore down electricity lines.

Church steeples in Myrtle Beach and Wilmington were toppled, hotels lost their roofs, and in Kenansville, North Carolina, an 80-year-old courthouse dome was ripped away and was transformed briefly into a flying saucer. Overhead traffic lights bounced from their wires like yo-yos and the electricity supply to almost a million homes was lost.

Most of those killed were motorists, people either trying

to drive away from the approaching storm or tough-talking locals who thought they could sit out the hurricane despite repeated warnings. Cars were struck by falling trees, and in one incident in Durham County a motorist and fireman were killed when a bough hit a fire engine. Homeowners and holidaymakers took shelter in town halls and Red Cross centres.

Although the hurricane was yesterday downgraded to a tropical storm, flooding became a severe problem. The 12ft storm surges were followed by up to 15 in of rain, and many coastal areas, already soaked from 17 in of rain earlier this week, were submerged.

The hurricane diminished as it careered inland, but yesterday the remnants of the storm headed north towards Washington. Virginia was posted on tropical storm watch. Fran is the third hurricane of the summer, and the next is already gathering force 500 miles east of the Leeward Islands in the Caribbean.

US fears bomber trial reprisals

FROM QUENTIN LETTS IN NEW YORK

THE State Department has warned expatriate Americans to be on their guard after the conviction of three Muslim militants of plotting a series of bombings on airliners bound for the United States.

There were also fears of a retaliatory strike on American soil by allies of Ramzi Yousef and his two co-defendants.

"Given the conviction, the State Department advises Americans travelling abroad that the potential exists for retaliation by Yousef's sympathisers against American interests," an official statement said. "While we have no specific threat information, American citizens travelling abroad should pay close attention to their personal security practices in light of the potential threat."

A further warning came from James Derian, a professor of international relations at the University of Massachusetts, who said: "It is

possible there will be future acts of terrorism to, in some way, liberate or avenge."

Rabbi Marvin Hier, an authority on terrorist matters, added: "If Yousef had many students, they will be thinking, 'How can we cause great havoc against the evil monster out there called the United States of America?'"

James Kallstrom, head of the FBI in New York, called Yousef and his colleagues "cowardly scum". Mr Kallstrom is leading the investigation into this summer's crash of TWA Flight 800, which looks increasingly to have been the result of a bomb.

Supporters of Yousef argued that the TWA crash had made the jury at the Manhattan District Court sympathetic to the arguments of the prosecution. Yousef and his co-defendants are due to be sentenced on December 5. They are likely to be jailed for life.

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Physicians braced to cut into heart of Russian reform

FROM RICHARD BEESTON IN MOSCOW

RUSSIA'S senior medical fraternity was yesterday trying to establish whether President Yeltsin's decision to have open-heart surgery was a blessing or a curse for their profession. As the country's attention focused on the surgeons who could hold Russia's fate in their hands, doctors braced themselves for the long and difficult period ahead dealing with an extremely awkward patient. Outwardly, at least, doctors attempted to assure Russians, and the rest of the world, that the bypass surgery planned for the President later this month would be routine and safe. "They do a huge number of such operations and their results do not differ significantly from the West," said Mikhail Alshibaya, a surgeon at Moscow's Scientific Centre for Cardiovascular Surgery. "The difference is limited to the level of equipment and availability of medicines. But this does not apply to the President." The

Kremlin leader's welfare will be in the hands of Yevgeni Chazov, the head of Moscow's Cardiological Centre and one of the most experienced doctors in the country. He first came to public attention when it was revealed that he was responsible for keeping alive Leonid Brezhnev, the late Soviet leader, whose rule lasted far longer than anyone imagined was medically possible. Dr Chazov said last night that if the Russian leader chose to be operated on at his clinic, the procedure would be entrusted to Professor Renat Akchurin, the head of the heart department. In spite of the assurances, doctors were privately aware of the stakes involved in the operation and the catastrophic consequences if the operation fails. To some extent they are in a no-win situation. If the surgery goes well, it will be recorded as one of thousands performed successfully in Russia every

year. If it goes badly they will be blamed for endangering Russian democracy and triggering a dangerous succession contest. Certainly they will be treating one of the most difficult patients in the country. After his first heart attack last summer President Yeltsin threw himself back into his job too quickly and suffered a second seizure in the autumn. Then he fought a gruelling and stressful presidential campaign over four months, which caused another relapse at the end of June. In addition to his erratic behaviour, the Russian leader is also prone to extended drinking sessions, bouts of depression and suffers from other ailments, particularly his bad back. President Yeltsin's doctors can, however, take some comfort from the historical precedent of stormy relations between Russian leaders and their physicians. The failure of court doctors to treat the ailing Crown Prince Aleksandr led Tsarina Alexandra to turn to Rasputin, the Siberian mystic and faith healer, whose influence over the royal family contributed to its eventual downfall. Under Soviet rule the situation scarcely improved and in one particularly notorious episode the entire medical profession was threatened with persecution under Stalin's infamous "Doctors' Plot", when a group of doctors, mainly of Jewish origin, were accused plotting to "wipe out the leading cadres of the USSR". The purge never took place because Stalin suffered a stroke soon afterwards and died, some suspect because doctors were too frightened to treat him or deliberately let him die. Last year President Yeltsin fired one of his physicians, apparently for being too insistent about the need for the Russian leader to change his unhealthy and stressful lifestyle.



Booked: As part of a Russian government crackdown on tax evasion, officers of Moscow's tax police yesterday arrest employees of a company that had refused to show its financial accounts to the revenue authorities

WORLD SUMMARY

Mother Teresa out of clinic

Delhi: Mother Teresa, 86, defied her doctors yesterday and checked out of Woodlands Nursing Home in Calcutta after being treated for heart problems, pneumonia, fever and malaria (Christopher Thomas writes). She was ordered to take a long rest before resuming work for the Missionaries of Charity Order she founded six decades ago. She thanked doctors as she left, leaving them astounded by her recovery. "May God bless you," she said. Dr C. K. Sen, the clinic's medical director, said the six doctors looking after her had agreed that she could be discharged today but Mother Teresa insisted on leaving immediately.

Blazing sheep ship missing

Sydney: A blazing abandoned ship with almost 70,000 live Australian sheep on board has gone missing somewhere in the Seychelles area of the Indian Ocean, officials said. The vessel and its cargo — which prompted protests from animal welfare groups — had still not been found hours after a rescue tug from the Gulf of Aden and a converted car carrier from Karachi reached the area where it had been abandoned. (Reuters)

Molesters may be castrated

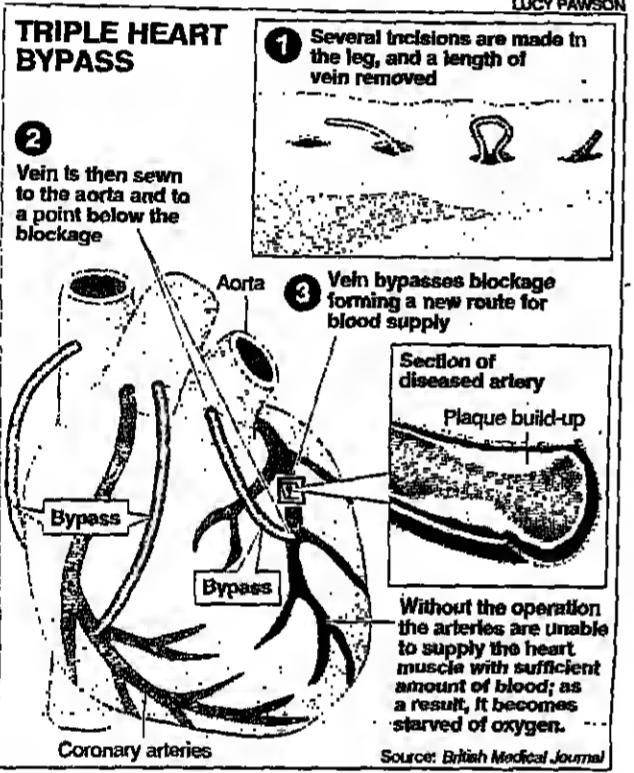
Singapore: Singapore may consider penalising child molesters with castration. Chief Justice Yong Pung How said in remarks published here. The Straits Times said he spoke of castration when he threw out an appeal by an incorrigible sex offender who was sentenced to 20 years' preventive detention and 24 strokes of the cane for molesting five schoolboys. (AFP)

Sydney Games president quits

Sydney: Businessman John Hliffe, 59, announced he had quit after only six months as Sydney 2000 Olympics president, hinting at differences with the organising committee. Michael Knight, the New South Wales Olympics Minister, said he would assume Mr Hliffe's role, but with the title of chairman. (AFP)

Kitchen killing

Hong Kong: A Chinese dim sum cook was jailed for life by a Hong Kong court for killing his boss and carving her up after claiming she had become too amorous, offering him money for sex. (Reuters)



Three-way route to recovery

THE fact that President Yeltsin is to have a triple heart bypass operation indicates how extensive the coronary arterial disease is and how many of the arteries were identified as being blocked when they were X-rayed by angiography. Although to the lay person it sounds particularly sinister when the operation is described as a double or triple bypass, it would be expected that a man of Mr Yeltsin's age, build and lifestyle would require a multiple bypass. It is unlikely that Mr Yeltsin would have single coronary arterial disease requiring surgery rather than the more usual treatment by angioplasty. This is the technique of expanding a balloon inserted into a coronary artery so that it flattens any obstruction against the arterial wall. In a bypass operation, a length of vein is cut from the leg, or the internal mammary artery is taken from within the chest wall and grafted on to the aorta before being attached to the coronary arterial tree below the obstruction. In this way, the vein provides an effective bypass. The operation is a long one, usually taking four or five hours. For much of this time the patient's life is maintained by a heart-lung machine, since the heart has been stopped and has to be restarted.

DR THOMAS STUTTFORD

US eases pressure on Yeltsin over Nato

FROM ROGER BOYES IN BONN

AMERICA is stretching out the calendar on Nato's eastward enlargement to ease the pressure on President Yeltsin as he fights not only to regain his health but also to keep his grip on power. That message emerged after talks yesterday between Warren Christopher, the Secretary of State, and Helmut Kohl, the German Chancellor. Herr Kohl is due to meet Mr Yeltsin today in his dacha outside Moscow in part to determine how the physical condition of the Russian leader is affecting his position in the Kremlin. Mr Christopher made plain, during the talks and in a Stuttgart speech, that neither America nor Nato was willing to accept a Russian veto on eastward enlargement. Nor was Washington ready to make the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe the main security vehicle for the continent — a long-standing wish of the Russians. Nato, he said, would remain "the central pillar of our security engagement".



Christopher Russian veto not acceptable

will be named as the most favoured candidates. Officials close to Mr Christopher seemed to suggest yesterday that this summit would be held in the summer at the earliest. The reason for this disagreement between Bonn and Washington is the American concern about the condition of Mr Yeltsin. Nato enlargement could be seriously harmed if it became part of a struggle for the Kremlin succession. The formal announcement that Poland will join Nato is expected to pump up the rhetoric not only of Russian Communists and nationalists but also give ammunition to General Aleksandr Lebed, the Russian security chief. The American idea seems to be that a special "Charter for Russia" should be worked out in advance of the nomination of Nato candidates. At the same time, Mr Christopher said, "Ukraine should not be neglected and should be encouraged to stick to a pro-Western course." This comment may have been inserted late into the speech, after his talks with Herr Kohl who has just returned from a visit to Ukraine.

World leaders who kept tradition of medical secrecy

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON AND SUSAN BELL IN PARIS

IN THE past the question of the American President's health was so closely guarded that often only a private physician was privy to his medical history. When the Stock Exchange collapsed in 1929, for example, Grover Cleveland, the American President diagnosed with cancer of the mouth, ordered that he be operated upon in the secrecy of a private yacht. Not even the Vice-President was informed of the surgery, which resulted in the removal of large parts of Mr Cleveland's upper jaw. The political concerns of revealing details about the health of the American leader persisted until the 1960s. Woodrow Wilson, who suffered a stroke while in office and was incapacitated for four months, revealed only scant details of his crippling illness. Franklin Roosevelt, in addition to polio, had dangerously high blood pressure and, on being sworn in for a record fourth time in 1945, was already suffering from severe heart disease. He died three months later. John F. Kennedy hid from his closest aides a condition known as Addison's disease, a failure of the adrenal glands, which he felt might have affected his election chances against Richard Nixon in 1960. It is not just American presidents who have shown reluctance to reveal their state of health. Francois Mitterrand, the former French President, underwent three operations and chemotherapy for the prostate cancer which finally killed him, aged 79, on January 8 this year. His

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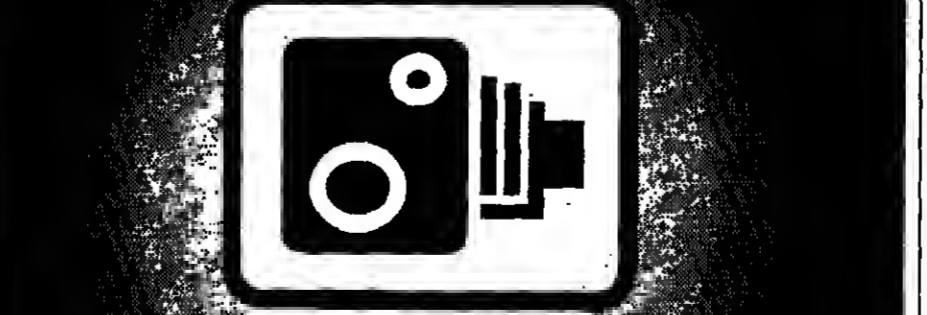
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18 DEGREE VACANCIES

SCIENCE degree vacancies appear today for students hoping to convert A-level grades into a university or college place this autumn.

Courses are filling at a fast rate but with a flexible approach, there should be science places left well into the clearing process. The Times service, the only daily national newspaper listing of degree vacancies, runs on a three-day cycle until September 13. Engineering and technology courses appear on Tuesdays and Fridays, science subjects on Wednesdays and Saturdays, and arts and social sciences on Mondays and Thursdays.

An asterisk shows courses available in a variety of combinations. All others are identified by the codes used in the Ucas handbook.

AGRICULTURE/AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGY

Aberdeen, D21C, D200, D220, D240, D12, D22, D23, D24, D25, D26, D27, D28, D29, D30, D31, D32, D33, D34, D35, D36, D37, D38, D39, D40, D41, D42, D43, D44, D45, D46, D47, D48, D49, D50, D51, D52, D53, D54, D55, D56, D57, D58, D59, D60, D61, D62, D63, D64, D65, D66, D67, D68, D69, D70, D71, D72, D73, D74, D75, D76, D77, D78, D79, D80, D81, D82, D83, D84, D85, D86, D87, D88, D89, D90, D91, D92, D93, D94, D95, D96, D97, D98, D99, D100, D101, D102, D103, D104, D105, D106, D107, D108, D109, D110, D111, D112, D113, D114, D115, D116, D117, D118, D119, D120, D121, D122, D123, D124, D125, D126, D127, D128, D129, D130, D131, D132, D133, D134, D135, D136, D137, D138, D139, D140, D141, D142, D143, D144, D145, D146, D147, D148, D149, D150, D151, D152, D153, D154, D155, D156, D157, D158, D159, D160, D161, D162, D163, D164, D165, D166, D167, D168, D169, D170, D171, D172, D173, D174, D175, D176, D177, D178, D179, D180, D181, D182, D183, D184, D185, D186, D187, D188, D189, D190, D191, D192, D193, D194, 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DESIGN Should Norman Foster's new mega-tower be allowed to overshadow the City's skyline?



RISING STAR 'I was a cliché — a starving artist in a cold garret,' says the painter James Hague

THE TIMES ARTS



GOING OUT From Michael Flatley, on tour with his dazzling new show, Lord of the Dance ...



GOING OUT ... to Daniel Barenboim in Birmingham: all the top events are in Weekend, page 14

ARCHITECTURE: Marcus Binney on a plan to build a 94-storey skyscraper in the City of London

Is this a tower too far?

Not since Sir Christopher Wren has an architect had such an eye for the main chance as Sir Norman Foster. On Monday he will reveal a spectacular plan for the tallest building in Europe on the site of London's bomb-devastated Baltic Exchange — a 94-storey, thousand-foot skyscraper twice as high as the NatWest Tower — topping, no doubt to the chagrin of his German clients, the 984 feet of his Commerzbank tower now rising in Frankfurt.



Sir Norman Foster's proposed tower would be twice the height of the skyscrapers that already dominate St Paul's

It would dominate all of the capital

Foster has told the Royal Fine Art Commission that the proposed tower will usher in a new era in the City, the first in a generation of very, very high buildings. This is no slender pencil tower but a building capable of housing 10,000 workers, with individual floors of 30,000 square feet. Early sketches showed a kidney-shaped building set back at different stages. Paul Drury, head of English Heritage's London division, says: "I personally feel it would dominate not only the City but the whole of London, pushing St Paul's aside in a way that the NatWest Tower does not, and become the image of the capital." This, of course, may be precisely what the City Corporation wants. A serious debate is needed as to whether we want still higher buildings in London and, if so, where they should go. Some of the most beautiful

and urbane capitals have eschewed high-rises altogether. Copenhagen and St Petersburg are the best examples, while the beauty of Paris owes much to the ban on tall buildings within a three-kilometre radius of the Elysée Palace. Manhattan may be thrilling but Washington is beautiful precisely because of stringent height controls. In London there was a standard 70ft cornice line until Harold Macmillan allowed the London Hilton to breach it. Then followed a rash of tall blocks which blight Hyde Park to this day. The Square Mile had an extra level of control in the form of a 5:1 plot ratio, allowing the equivalent of five times the ground area to be built on the site. What few realise is that the City suddenly abandoned plot ratio controls a few years ago. Now, in theory at least, the sky's the limit and Foster is the first to exploit this fact. The City's vote was prompted by competition from Canary Wharf and Docklands. It has opened the door to what the City planner Peter Roes calls the "Nissan car plant argument": if a major international corporation will bring its business your way, you level hills or flatten old buildings to meet its requirements. The City did just this for Deutsche Bank when it decided to move its headquarters to

London. To provide the bank with a large enough "floor plate", it was allowed to bridge Great Winchester Street. There are also controls over the views of the dome of St Paul's from the river or from Richmond Park, Hampstead and Highgate. But the Baltic Exchange site, as Foster spotted, is outside any of these protected viewing cones. It will be affected by new planning guidelines covering high buildings in London, which are expected shortly. These will be subject to public consultation. There is a case for seeking to demolish all tall buildings in central London during the next 50 years, although now that tower blocks are candidates for listing, this seems an impossible goal. The debate is skewed by the fact that so far the capital lacks a single high-rise building of star quality in world terms. The Stock Exchange Tower is demonically ugly and most of the others just lumpy or dumpy. The only one with real grace is the Commercial Union tower overlooking Leadenhall Street. Rogers's Lloyd's, awesome as it is, repels as many people as it attracts. The banks and finance houses which will occupy the new tall building want much, much larger floor areas on every level than exist, say, in the NatWest Tower. To achieve elegant proportions, it may be necessary to build far higher, as Foster has recognised, to 80 to 90 storeys. Also at stake is what remains of the traditional character of the Square Mile. Twenty years ago it was one of the most harmonious quarters in Europe, street after street of

GREAT BRITISH HOPES Rising stars in the arts firmament JAMES HAGUE

Age: 25 Profession: Painter Dab hand: Hague's self-portrait won this year's BP Portrait Award competition. His painting, with its subtle echoes of Cubism in the creased skin and its combination of raw flesh tones and sensitive brush work, is being compared to Lucien Freud and Stanley Spencer.



Hard to pin down: The artist himself is more elusive. After a chain of phone calls to Hague's friends whose sofas, it seemed, he had always just vacated, I eventually caught him in Newcastle where he formerly studied Fine Arts. Where has he come from? Hague, son of a fingerprint expert and a chiropodist, grew up in Derbyshire. Since art school he has been scraping a living in Paris, working by day as a pavement artist, copying classical masterpieces. By night, he painted portraits for himself. "I was a cliché," he declares. "A starving artist in a cold garret." On his self-portrait (shown above): "It is about economics, the economics of paint," he elucidates. "There isn't very much paint in it because, literally, I hardly had any. People keep comparing it to Freud," he adds. "But at the time I was looking at medieval works." On the state of the art: "There are a lot of people doing portrait painting now. The standard is very high. But much of it, though technically brilliant, is impersonal." Ultimate ambition: "At the end of the day," he says, "I like to paint something I can sit in front of for a long time like a television. Hopefully, viewers can build a relationship with the person I painted even though they don't know them."

KATE BASSETT

Advertisement for the Almeida Theatre production of 'Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?' featuring Edward Albee's play, directed by Howard Davies, with a cast including Clare Holman, Diana Rigg, Lloyd Owen, and David Suchet.

Advertisement for the play 'Ashes to Ashes' at the Royal Court Theatre, written and directed by Harold Pinter, with a cast including Lindsay Duncan and Stephen Rea.

Advertisement for 'The Sunday Times' featuring a classic car and a promotion for five classic cars to be won. Text includes: 'THE SUNDAY TIMES', 'FIVE CLASSIC CARS TO BE WON', 'Relive the heyday of British motoring with our competition to win one of five classic sports cars PLUS every entrant can also receive, FREE, a unique, limited-edition Royal Mail First Day Cover So start collecting tokens in The Sunday Times this weekend for a chance to be the envy of any car collector'.

Advertisement for Tower CD sale. Text includes: 'TEN YEARS AT NUMBER ONE TOWER 1986-1996', 'massive CD sale', 'save over 25%', 'Thousands of other titles at fantastic prices available at Tower NOW', and lists various CD titles and prices.

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THEATRES

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MTL MUSIC THEATRE LONDON Oper in the fast lane! DON GIOVANNI. Includes program details for Don Giovanni.

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OPINION

Manchester has taken a £42 million gamble on the chancy science of acoustics

THEATRE

The Latin spitfire takes over as the new Norma Desmond in Sunset Boulevard

THE TIMES ARTS

JAZZ

The consummate lyrical gifts of the great cornettist Ruby Braff go on show in London

ON MONDAY

Does Ben Elton's novel Popcorn, soon to be staged, fairly lampoon the ethics of Hollywood?

A new concert hall! The very words brim with optimism. do they not? The city that builds a new concert hall sends out clear signals. It is prosperous but enlightened. Respectful of cultural tradition but far-sighted. Bourgeois, certainly; but dynamic with it. And, of course, keen to flaunt its musical heritage.

A sound investment? Wait and hear

Manchester has much to flaunt. The Hallé Orchestra has been the city's proud ambassador for 140 years, and under the demanding Kent Nagano it is perhaps regaining the flair of 30 years ago, when the adored John Barbirolli was at the helm. The fine BBC Philharmonic has its home in the city; so does the Manchester Camerata, the Royal Northern College of Music, excellent amateur choirs, terrific brass bands, and one of the best university music faculties.

budget. How very different from London's ghastly chronicle of burgled culture palaces: the ten-year-old Barbican Centre; the "whoops there goes another hundred million" British Library; and of course that disaster-in-waiting, the Opera House redevelopment.

presence, epitomises that reborn resilience.

And the third hooray? Well, that must be withheld until Wednesday. For of all the architectural challenges known to mankind, the building of a concert hall is perhaps most prone to horrible, unrectifiable errors. As with the making of violins, it is a skill that was perfected with mysterious ease by the craftsmen of earlier centuries — think of Vienna's Musikverein or Amsterdam's Concertgebouw — but then apparently mislaid until very recently.

Second hooray: the hall symbolises a born-again confidence in the city. Sir Bob Scott's spirited dash for Olympic glory, though it ultimately failed to bring the wretched Games to Britain (thank heaven), did much to refocus Manchester's civic purpose. The revival of United's fortunes; the ascendancy of the city's pop groups; even Manchester's stoic determination to maintain business as normal in the devastating aftermath of the IRA bomb: all this has rekindled pride. The hall, with its uncompromising stainless-steel roof and massive

Why? Well, greed — or to put it another way, economics — played a part. The ideal hall for music is a shoebox shape with a mostly wooden interior and little balcony. It seats no more than 2,000 people. Unfortunately, 20th-century architects were usually pressurised into delivering halls that made sense



RICHARD MORRISON

commercially and politically. That meant building huge overhanging balconies so that thousands could be packed in for popular concerts (the Festival Hall seats nearly 3,000); or using concrete interiors;

or (as with the Barbican) devising halls as conference centres first and musical venues second.

London has suffered particularly badly. The Albert Hall was intended as a giant, communal wigwam for genteel Victorian society, not a showcase for music. And the Festival Hall and Barbican were simply built in the wrong era, with the wrong materials, in the wrong shape. The disgrace is that, with all this loney money floating about, there is no plan to build the outstanding new concert hall that the capital desperately lacks.

Luckily, top orchestras do not necessarily need top halls. The London Symphony Orchestra has prospered in spite of the Barbican. The New York Philharmonic copes with the barn-like Avery Fisher Hall. The Chicago Symphony has turned its hall's ultra-dry acoustics to its advantage, develop-

ing a crystalline precision. And the Philadelphia Orchestra has nurtured its luxurious timbres for decades in its universally reviled Academy of Music.

Conversely, a fine concert hall doesn't guarantee the presence of a fine orchestra. Two of the best concert halls built in Britain in recent years — at Nottingham and Basingstoke — have no resident orchestra at all. And I shall not forget the sardonic comment of a Texan music critic, as we emerged — shaken but not stirred — from listening to the first Dallas Orchestra playing the first concert in its new, \$52 million hall. "With that money," he observed, sourly but accurately, "they could have bought a damn good orchestra and stayed in the old building." I hope he didn't repeat that observation to Ross Perot, who

had chipped in \$12 million from his own pocket.

Oddly, Manchester has eschewed the most revolutionary and, to my mind, successful acoustical breakthrough of recent years: Russell Johnson's amazing adjustable reverberation chambers, which have made Symphony Hall in Birmingham the finest music venue in Britain. Instead, the Bridgewater Hall will have a permanently fixed acoustic. So if the technical chaps have got their sums wrong, it ain't easy to fix. There will be some chronic nibbling of fingernails on Wednesday.

What's more, the Bridgewater has a very daring interior design: a shoebox shape, but with balconies that sweep down towards the stage. The idea is that 2,400 people will commune in comparative intimacy with the performers. But will the balconies cut off too much resonance? All will be revealed in four days' time. Good luck, Manchester. Let's hope that fortune, and acoustical science, favours the brave.

Cream of the cornettists

CHAMBER jazz does not come much classier than this. For many years Ruby Braff, the scorbic Boston-born cornettist, seemed out of step with the on-wards-and-upwards ethos of jazz orthodoxy. But now that swing is respectable again, we are free to appreciate him for what he is: a consummate melodist.

Ruby Braff Pizza Express

ners demonstrated the extraordinary vocal aspect of his solos. Compared with the fiery records he made in his youth, Braff's playing has shed some of its dynamic range but his mastery of timbre remains unrivalled. Few horn players can sustain a burnished tone

at such low volume while negotiating nimble leaps into the lower register.

Bassist Dave Green and drummer Allan Ganley both responded to the openings that Braff created for them — and whenever the leader risked adding one curlicue too many, Brian Lemon was on hand with another astringent piano solo. Another treat awaits next week when Braff will be joined by the American guitarist Howard Alden.

CLIVE DAVIS

Matt Wolf meets one-time 'Latin spitfire' Rita Moreno, back in the big time in Sunset Boulevard

Perfectly Norma

From Monday Rita Moreno will be the fifth Norma Desmond to descend the gilded rotunda staircase of John Napier's deliciously gaudy set for Sunset Boulevard at the Adelphi Theatre. And she is also the most unexpected casting yet. While previous Normas — Patti LaFlore, Elaine Paige, et al — were either Broadway divas or huge-voiced Londoners, Moreno is a one-time MGM starlet who has won every award going (Oscar, Tony, Grammy, Emmy) without ever allying herself exclusively to musicals.

She is as likely to be found in California leading a domestic home life with her husband Leonard Gordon, a doctor, as she is to be scrambling after the great roles that — in any case — do not come her way daily. "My age is a difficult thing," she admits, her voice bearing no trace of the "Latin spitfire" accent of Anita in West Side Story (which brought her a 1961 Supporting Actress Oscar). "There just aren't that many roles in any medium for women my age, especially in musicals," adds Moreno, who at 64 is the oldest Norma yet. "There's Chita Rivera, there's myself. But we're like dinosaurs: those of us who do everything are dying out."

What about Bernadette Peters? Tyne Daly? Madonna? "I don't know if she's the actress yet that we are," Moreno says of Madonna. "Can Bernadette dance? Tyne doesn't. It's always two of acting, singing and dancing — but not all three."

Moreno was shortlisted to succeed Glenn Close in the Los Angeles premiere of Sunset in 1994 when Close left to open the show on Broadway. "I'm sure they saw every woman past 30 in the world." In the event, Faye Dunaway got the part only to have the production close around her. Moreno's eight-week London stint brings her back to a West End she last played in 1964. Then, prior to the press night, she replaced Nyree Dawn Porter as the second female lead in the London premiere of Broadway's She Loves Me, opposite Anne Rogers and Gary

Raymond. "They wrote a special song for me, Brains; it was such a scene-stealer."

Sunset Boulevard also returns Moreno to the big time, a sensation she has only intermittently enjoyed since she won her Oscar, so she will empathise fully with Norma when, in the second act, she revisits the studio that spurned her.

"I bring with me a world of experience and disappointments and years of not being asked to do anything," Moreno says. "After the Oscar I didn't work in movies for seven years. That doesn't match Norma's 20 to 25, but it's good enough."

• Sunset Boulevard is at the Adelphi (0171-344 0055).



Curtain call: Rita Moreno, now 64, returns to the West End stage after 32 years away

Advertisement for Riverdance in London. Text: LAST CHANCE TO SEE RIVERDANCE IN LONDON FINAL EXTENSION - MUST END 18 JANUARY 1997 PRIOR TO NATIONAL TOUR. Produced by Moya Doherty, Directed by John McColgan, Composed by Bill Whelan. Includes quote: "THRILLING - INTOXICATING - IT SUCCEEDS TRIUMPHANTLY".

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Millennium of the rising sun

Joanna Pitman sees Japan outshining us in the year 2000

One of Japan's top civil servants gave a telling little insight into his country the other day when I told him about the plans for a millennium festival at Greenwich. "Oh," he said somewhat taken aback. "So Britain is going to be marking the millennium with a spectacular event, then?" Spectacular event or spectacular fiasco: either way, I assured him, something big will be happening at Greenwich. "I must talk to the Prime Minister about this," he said. "Japan should be doing something, too. We wouldn't want to be left behind."

Most of Judaeo-Christian civilisation will mark the 2000th anniversary of the birth of Christ with a celebration. The Germans are going to stage a "world expo" in Hanover with millions of spectators, much expense and much excitement. The Italians are celebrating by sprucing up Rome, the Eternal City, and the Vatican has designated 2000 as a jubilee holy year. In Spain, the recent changes in government has muddled existing plans, but — given the country's slightly morbid sensitivity to the passage of time — Spaniards expect that something colourful will be organised. If only at the last minute. The Americans, too, are distracted by elections; but while no federal event is planned yet, several states are organising monuments or festivals. Only the French seem to have run out of steam after a decade of extravagant grands projects.

Elsewhere, the Muslim world is not interested in the millennium, for obvious reasons. Nur is most of Asia. Pockets of Christian Africa are planning modest events and Latin American nations will indulge in fabulous parties.

But why Japan? There is a small Christian population — 0.7 per cent of its 125 million total. But religious affiliation is a complex affair in Japan, where membership of religious organisations stands at the last count at 217,229,531. That this figure accounts for almost twice the population does not bother the statistically minded Japanese. This is because most belong to a range of religions. There are eight million gods in Japan and most Japanese consider themselves to be at the very least Buddhist and Shinto, possibly Christian as well for good measure.

Nevertheless, with so few signed up as Christians, the 2000th anniversary of the birth of Christ would seem rather an obscure event for the remaining 124,125,000 Japanese. And 2000 in Britain will be Heisei 12 in Japan, marking the 12th year of the reign of Emperor Akihito.

Yet Japan is, after all, exceedingly proud of its membership of the Western club of nations. Of all of Asia, it is Japan alone, a country whose cities only 50 years ago were heaps of charred rubble, its defeated people lice-infested and starving, that has joined the mature economies of the West at the international top table. It is endlessly gratified

by its membership of G7 (and as it is the world's largest creditor nation, the group would be meaningless without it). And in spite of its excessively geopolitical and diplomatic coyness on the world stage, it still dreams of one day being granted the ultimate accolade, in the form of permanent membership of the United Nations Security Council.

True, Japan would rather leave responsibility for the substance of world geopolitics to the West, for this is expensive and requires confidence. But when it comes to appearances — those beauty-contest international summits, world expos and international sporting events — Japan is ever eager to match the West and confirm its identity. Indeed, so keen is Japan on football that a multi-million dollar professional "socca" league has been created, and small boys are now ditching their baseball heroes to dribble footballs and dream of Wembley. Tokyo has lobbied so hard to host the 2002 football World Cup that it has ended up being appointed co-host with the equally eager South Korea — not an enviable position for either country. A millennium festival or monument therefore that is larger, more expensive or more spectacular than Britain's would be interpreted as a great success in insecure Japan.

We can be sure that Japan will celebrate the millennium

But what can the Japanese find to celebrate that was going on 2,000 years ago? At the time, Japan was undergoing a period of heavy colonisation. Mongoloid populations from the Korean peninsula were crossing into Japan and ushering the indigenous peoples, a Caucasian Aboriginal race known as the Ainu, up into the northern island of Hokkaido. At least one million are thought to have migrated from southern Korea into Japan between 500 BC and AD 500 and by the 7th century, the Korean immigrant peoples counted for eight ninths of the Japanese gene pool.

Today's Japanese will not, of course, be wishing to celebrate their ancestral links with Korea. Nor will they wish to dig up the history of Christianity in their country, having brutally suppressed the faith in the late 16th and early 17th centuries. Christianity today is more a fashion than a faith, with every young woman dreaming of a white wedding in a mock Baroque chapel to follow her Buddhist-temple and Shinto-shrine marriage ceremonies.

We can be sure that Japan will do something for the millennium, whether festival, expo or monument — and at high speed, if the rebuilding of Kobe is anything to go by. "We'll have our millennium. It'll be a kind of fashion. If other Western countries are doing it, we will too," says the civil servant. Given the historical vortex that Japan has passed through in the past 160 years — the dizzying series of economic, cultural and even physical transformations — the disorientation, the constant soul-searching and constant comparisons with the West are hardly surprising.

Graham Mather argues that public service unions who strike should lose their legal immunities

Next week's TUC conference presents a small problem for John Monks, and three large difficulties for Tony Blair. The TUC General Secretary contemplates a trade union movement with a disappearing membership. Fewer than 6.7 million people now belong to a trade union: far fewer than, for example, a motoring organisation like the AA, and only half as many as in 1979.

To distract attention from the vanishing members, the TUC will publish opinion polls suggesting that unions are becoming more popular with voters. But the TUC knows that improvement in image is achieved only when unions are quiet and forgotten. As Mr Monks ruminates this week, the rash of rail, Tube and post strikes could drag the unions back into the limelight and make them a significant election issue.

Mr Monks's dilemma is that while union numbers have fallen, the unions themselves have changed scarcely at all. They have not moved effectively into the provision of services to members. They have not carved out a new niche as purveyors of world-class training and skill development. They have not attracted the new "knowledge workers" or reached out to the self-employed.

Instead the unions have their eyes on three rescue packages. Each one is an uneasy prospect for new Labour. The first hope is that Labour would

Why Labour won't rescue the unions

bring the unions in from the cold. The mere feeling that they were once again being listened to, that John Edmonds, Jimmy Knapp, Rodney Bickerstaffe and their colleagues are wanted on board, would give the TUC new strength. Yet British governments of any colour can now pick up ideas and advice from a myriad of outside agencies, societies, think-tanks, single-issue groups, academics and experts. The only requirement is that the ideas are potent, well thought-through and effective in meeting policy problems. Nothing in the TUC's past or present suggests that this is a skill at which it excels.

Item number two is a more nerve-racking proposition. In John Smith's time Labour offered the unions legislation which would boost their membership by forcing employers, for the first time in British law, to recognise unions for bargaining purposes even if they did not wish to do so. It would have meant that if a

union secured a majority in a ballot of workers concerned, employers would have had to bargain with the union. Under such a law union membership could be expected to grow. Yet employers are likely to fight vigorously against a move which would go further even than Michael Foot's union-boasting measures of the 1970s.

The third nightmarish prospect links two of the most negative buzzwords in British politics: unions and Europe. Led by Mr Monks's deputy, David Lea, British union officials working in the European TUC, and Labour's MEPs exerting pressure on the European Commission, have begun to turn the European Union's Social Action Programme into a shopping list of measures affecting working hours, part-time work, union recognition, and employment protection. An 87-point list of items to be introduced through the social chapter has been

drawn up. While Mr Blair has been reassuring business that Labour would not introduce such measures if they damaged competitiveness, perplexed Europeans have pointed out that once the social chapter is signed the ability to pick and choose social measures largely disappears.

In a pre-election period the unions seem, therefore, a troublesome tar baby. To preserve a clean and well-groomed image the only course is to keep at a safe distance.

This becomes impossible if they are reverting to the old strike habits. The Thatcher reforms removed unions' legal immunities unless strikes had been preceded by a ballot. In the private, competitive sector of the economy this solves the problem. Workers will weigh in the ballot the likelihood that strikes will divert customers to competitors — possibly for good. Yet in monopoly, non-competitive industries and services there is little chance for customers to

find an alternative service. So in post-Tube and rail disputes union members are virtually certain to favour strike action in a ballot. If customers are captive, there is no risk. Only if union members place the convenience of the public and the long-term viability of the enterprise over their own pay and conditions, is there any incentive to exercise restraint.

It would be best to remove all legal immunities from strikers unless and until competition is introduced. The move would be simple to implement, easy to legislate, and existing competition law would define which monopolies were caught. Those who are damaged by breaches of contract organised by the unions would be able to recover compensation for their losses. There would be no need for politicians to intervene. It would be the logical completion of the Thatcher reforms.

How would Labour react to such a proposal? It is committed to finding alternatives to strikes, protecting customers, and encouraging competition. It is far from certain that Mr Blair would rule out such a plan. No wonder the TUC contemplates next week's conference, the unions' future role, and its part in the election campaign with ill-concealed alarm.

The author is Conservative MEP for Hampshire N. and Oxford and president of the European Policy Forum.

Chapels in the valley of tears

In England even housing estates are listed, but Welsh chapels are still ignored

What form of beauty moves us to tears? Certainly a novel, a play, a film, the sound of the human voice. But I have never cried before a building, unless jogged by some personal association. Like a painting, architecture works on the mind before it works on the emotions. Yet the writer Owen Edwards recalled: "You have not seen the old chapel at Llanuwchllyn, by the still water, the roof no higher than the village houses round. Its walls were bare, the benches comfortable or hard, according to the sermon, the windows long and narrow and without ornament. That is the most beautiful place where I have ever been. It is the place where I began to think, where I fell in love, felt the dread of damnation and the joy of forgiveness... When thoughts of Heaven come to my unsettled mind, Paradise is in me that old chapel at Llanuwchllyn."

Of all Britain's cultural artefacts, none is so neglected as the Welsh chapel. This week, as the English were listing historic housing estates and office blocks, the Welsh protested that their buildings were slipping through the net. The rules had been set by English criteria: Welsh history was passed over. "They ignore the distinctive nature of Welsh architecture," protested the *Western Mail*, pleading the notorious dictionary: "for Wales see England".

Nothing in Welsh architecture is more distinctive than the modest temples of Zion that grace the streets, villages and mountainsides of the Principality. As Edwards wrote, chapels formed the hearts and improved the minds of a nation. As they now face closure, reputedly at the rate of one a week, they stand as monuments to the history of Wales. They lie in the path of the bulldozer and the bulldozer, twin weapons of the Welsh Office's enthusiasm to coat Wales in housing estates and wind farms.

Anthony Jones, former Rector of London's Royal College of Art, is a lonely defender of the Welsh chapel. His study of its architecture first appeared in Wales in 1983. An expanded edition is now published in England (by Alan Sutton) and is a polemical masterpiece. Jones con-



Summoning the Valleys to chapel: the founder of Methodism, John Wesley, preaching at Gwennap Pit, from the picture by W.O. Geller

tures the spirit of a thousand Bethels, Bethedias, Salems and Carnells and lifts them above the mists of the mountains and valleys. He brings to life the myriad sects, Baptists, Unitarians, Congregationalists, Presbyterians and Methodists — Wesleyan and Calvinist.

Nowhere in Britain, possibly nowhere in Europe, possessed so many places of worship per person as did Wales at the end of the 19th century. I imagine this is still the case. There were over 5,000 in total, and Merioneth had a chapel to every 159 people. Many were grim, rigid and often exclusive. In the Dovey Valley village, where I holidayed as a child, there were three rival chapels as well as a church. I marvelled at the doctrinal intensity that must have kept them apart — an intensity more due to farm, family and class than to theology.

Chapels dominated Welsh culture and education to a degree that even the Scottish Kirk could not equal. They were citadels of self-improvement in communities that were desperately poor and lacked rich patrons. The historian Gwyn Williams refers to their influence as a "crabbed narrowness, a mean-spirited tyranny, yet also a sweeping spiritual vision, a populism, a warmth, a social equality and an openness to talent in verse and music". Many chapels began life in

secret barns. Those that today seem lost on mountainsides (if not flattened by the Forestry Commission) owe their isolation to small groups of shepherds worshipping far from the shrewd eyes of 17th-century inform-

ers. In the 18th century they became preaching boxes, barely distinguishable from the houses and farms to which they were attached. Welsh chapels were not about holiness or ritual. The qualities demanded of their builders were "respect" and "seaminess".

The chapel boom began with the final Anglican-Methodist schism of 1811. As itinerant preachers arrived in each village, and as each village decamped to the industrial valleys of Glamorgan, chapels erupted. They were Welsh speaking and Welsh singing. The chapel was the temple of the spoken word, "a palace of the oral arts". The sermon was its centrepiece. Ruskin's "half hour to raise the dead". The door of understanding was reached down the path of emotion, and sometimes the path of politics. One preacher declared his best tools to be the Bible and *The Times*. The cost to each congregation of so

many places of worship was crippling. Chapel fundraising became a culture in itself. A "preachment" in Merthyr raised £900. The rights to the hymn *Guide Me O Thy Great Jehovah* were sold to buy a chapel in Cwm Rhondda, after which the tune was named. A Dowlais chapel was prosecuted for gambling. A Maerdy lottery was stopped after the chapel deacons won all the prizes.

The essence of these chapels, and the cause of their pluralism, was their independence of ecclesiastical hierarchy. Deacons agonised over cost and design. Many were simple, even mean, but few were the same. There was little of the assembly-line Gothic of 19th-century Anglicanism. This was a vernacular architecture to suit a vernacular religion. Style caused constant concern, since style conveyed symbolism. A handbook of 1847 warned against the "abominable idolatry of classicism" as well as against pointed Gothic, as favoured by "the shrines, high altars, sacristies and Lady chapels of Popish superstition".

So what to choose? The Wesleyans, closest to Anglicanism, settled mostly for Gothic, but the majority decided that classicism was the lesser of pagan evils. The terraces of the Valleys thus blossomed with the motifs of Alberti and Palladio. Georgian gables became porticos, windows became Venetian, steeples and campaniles loomed above slate roofs. Apotheosis was reached in Newtown Baptist Church, Cardigan's Mount Zion and the "cathedral of Welsh Nonconformity", the majestic Morrison Tabernacle. Welsh chapel architects were unknown in England and seldom appear in histories of Victorian building. Yet Richard Owen and Richard Davies of Bangor, designed more than 250 chapels each, many of outstanding quality.

The worst enemy of Wales, here as so often, is the Welsh. Local politicians have viewed chapels as they viewed the pits and terraces of the Valleys, as cultural prisons which they could escape only by destroying them. With its hills disappearing under concrete and its towns under estates and supermarkets, Wales has little enough to show for its history. Yet there are still these askets of piety. The human eye is willing. I believe it will come to appreciate the simple artistry that went into chapel-building. It can only do so where that building survives.

If the art of architecture could cry just now, Welsh chapels would be its tears.

Simon Jenkins

curb their enthusiasm for firing guns into the air when wishing the bride and groom good luck. "Damages to hapless people caught unaware" have been cited in police reports after a woman sitting in the courtyard of a house hard by a wedding party suddenly felt "something pierce her chest". The something turned out to be a bullet; her wound was minor but police have been reporting similar incidents. "When a wedding procession cruises along the road, it invites curious residents of nearby

houses to stand on their balconies, unaware of the dangers they face from randomly fired bullets by the revellers," say the police, who are offering an alternative means of demonstrating affection: the sale of pre-recorded cassettes featuring the sound of gunfire.

In the well-heeled circles of Piccadilly, talk is of socks. Vast quantities of socks. Kerry Packer, the polo-playing Australian tycoon, popped in to the gents outfitters S. Fisher last week and ordered 300 pairs. Very Imelda Marcos.

Press on

LABOUR may be celebrating its £1-million donation from Chelsea FC's vice-chairman Matthew Harding but if Tony Blair's burly press officer Alastair Campbell carries on as he did yesterday afternoon, the party shouldn't count its chickens.

Campbell was trying to give the fêted donor some advice on how to deal with the press. Harding wasn't having any of it, but Campbell persisted. The only way to shut him up was to bust in. "By the way Alastair, what happens if I ask for my money back?" he asked, but Campbell continued. "What'll you do if the cheque bounces?" asked



How would the Medici Venus take to being dressed in Armani?

Harding — the question that finally persuaded Campbell to close his mouth.

Worn out

DISBELIEF greeted reports in Florence yesterday that the designer Giorgio Armani is planning to dress the ancient Roman statues of the Uffizi Gallery in his baggy clothes as part of the city's Biennial exhibition. The Italian press says that 14 classical statues will wear Armani for three months from September



21. In London, the Italian Cultural Institute was astonished. "It's the decision of the soprintendente. It's a bit tacky, perhaps, but stranger things have happened."

Brian Sewell, the vigorous art critic, called the idea delicious. "And how do you cut trousers around a fig-leaf?" he asked. Armani says he has created 15 outfits that "pay homage to the spirit of Renaissance artists". But after yesterday's excitement, there was talk of mannequins being used and not statues.

Caught out

THERE was a tense moment at Harvey Nichols's swanky Fifth Floor Café the other day. Jenima Khan, lunching quietly with her friends Diana, Princess of Wales, and Lady Cosima Somerset, suddenly realised that Kathy Botham was on the other side of the room.

Now Jenima had not set eyes on Kathy since the cricket libel trial between their respective husbands — which Imran famously won, leaving Ian Botham with a legal bill of £250,000. And last month, after the case,

Jenima had to duck a lively bounce from Kathy on the front page of a tabloid newspaper in which Kathy accused her of "pleating" in court and said: "We could have dug up all sorts of allegations about Imran's past, but we decided not to play that game."

After spotting Kathy at her table with friends, Jenima was seen heading purposefully towards her. The tension was palpable as she introduced herself but within seconds they were chatting amicably, their sticky wicket behind them.

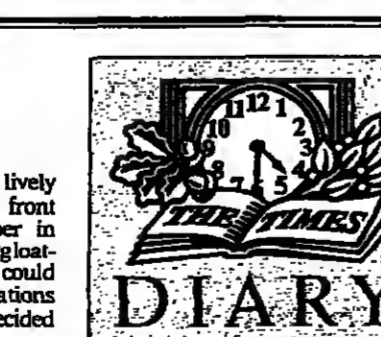


Jenima: patching things up

A stowaway sparrow joined a Tornado mission over Iraq earlier this year. It became hypoxic — blacked out — but was revived with 100 per cent oxygen administered by the navigator. "The aircraft entered Iraqi airspace armed with two Sidewinder missiles and a sparrow," says an RAF report.

Ward round

WITH Boris Yeltsin admitting that he needs heart by-pass surgery, I have news of a medical complaint from President Clinton. He has



been seen popping pills recently, on the golf course.

It was at the 11th tee, according to golf-pro Rick Reilly writing in *Sports Illustrated* magazine, that the Clintons' valet ran up with five coloured pills. "Look at these," the President growled. "Honestly, do you feel any security in knowing that the leader of your country has to take this many pills?"

Clinton's doctor, also playing golf, was stern. "Just take them, dammit," he said, and his patient obeyed. The White House insists they were no more than vitamins. But why in the middle of the day — and on doctor's orders?

Hit record

WEDDING guests in the United Arab Emirates have been told to



"I'm fine, Norma. I just can't watch Chelsea anymore"



RIPE TO ROTTEN

The rapid "maturing" of Labour's plans for devolution

Normally parties have to wait for the pressures of government before being forced into rapid changes of policy. On devolution for Scotland, Labour has been executing dazzling changes of direction with the speed, but none of the grace, of a downhill skier. Now the party has fallen flat on its face. In the space of the past two months the Labour Party has changed its position on devolution three times, and the two most recent changes have occurred less than a week apart. Labour's desire to decentralise power is an honourable one but the way in which the party leadership has approached the matter suggests that it is profoundly uncomfortable with the consequences of its own policies.

Under the late John Smith's leadership Labour's commitment to a tax-raising Scottish parliament was unquestioned. He considered it "unfinished business", the answer to Scotland's aspirations for autonomy within the United Kingdom. Since Tony Blair became Labour leader he has given the impression of regarding devolution as a problem, not a solution.

Mr Blair was sensitive to the skill with which the Scottish Secretary, Michael Forsyth, had played on fears of an Edinburgh assembly levying an oppressive "tartan tax". Not only had Mr Forsyth eroded support for devolution, he had also associated Labour in the public mind with plans for new taxes.

The Labour leadership, anxious to neutralise the impression that its first instinct was to tax, proposed a referendum which would ask Scots first if they wanted the body, and then if they wanted to grant it powers to raise taxes. The decision to hold a referendum caught the Labour Party in Scotland by surprise. It undermined the credibility of Mr Blair as a sincere devolutionist. If he could not trust policy to his Scottish party when in Opposition, how could he expect it to form an autonomous administration in Edinburgh?

Labour activists in Scotland have been campaigning all summer to ensure that any referendum has only one question: yes or no to a parliament with tax-raising powers. In

an effort to stop the dissidents, George Robertson, the Shadow Scottish Secretary, secured the agreement of the Scottish executive of the Labour Party to a new scheme. It proposed a two-question referendum before any parliament was set up and another referendum, after its establishment, to trigger the tax-raising powers. The policy, as convoluted as any composite from the party's past, was praised by Mr Blair as "mature". A policy made last Saturday and mature on Sunday was past its sell-by date yesterday. It went from ripe to rotten more quickly than a mango in the midday sun.

In the event of a Labour victory, the path to a Scottish parliament will still be far from smooth. The West Lothian Question remains unanswered; Scottish over-representation is unaddressed; the response of the English to Scots enjoying both an extra assembly and greater spending per head has been ignored. Moreover, new Labour MPs in English marginals may not appreciate the time spent legislating for Scotland: why should their constituents take second place?

The referendum is set to create as many problems as it seeks to solve. Scots may see in an assembly the autonomy they demand. But it stretches faith in their fervour to imagine they will also vote to grant such a body tax-raising powers before legislation has even passed through Parliament. For the last ten years, Labour has argued that anything less than a parliament with tax-raising powers would be inherently unstable and wrong for Scotland. Such an assembly would be no party's first choice, too impotent to satisfy reformers, an unnecessary extra layer of bureaucracy for sceptics. Such a parliament was killed by apathy in 1979. Its chances would look scarcely better now.

There is a genuine desire among Scots to see their distinctive character recognised and given expression within the United Kingdom. Labour is right to have tried to speak to that need. Although its latest position may be safer than the previous one, all its efforts in Opposition have so far been flawed. If he is to succeed in government Mr Blair will have to think again.

GIFT HORSES

A closer examination of teeth is required

Something is rotten in the state of the banking business. It is summed up with chilling honesty by the member of Deutsche Bank's management board with overall responsibility for assets management. "If you have a star performer in your business," says Rolf Breuer, "you have a temptation and a tendency to let him go on, even if he is not completely within his business limits." First Barings, now Deutsche Morgan Grenfell. Will they never learn?

That Peter Young, the disgraced fund manager in charge of two of Morgan Grenfell's unit trusts, was allowed to build up huge and unauthorised holdings in obscure, unlisted Scandinavian companies suggests an absence of supervisory responsibility matched only by that of Barings. As with Nick Leeson's dealings in derivatives, Mr Young's activities should have been spotted and stopped by at least four different internal checks and balances. But, presumably because his profit performance seemed so impressive, others at Deutsche Morgan Grenfell were reluctant to intervene.

What banks seem not to have realised is that they should be just as suspicious of large profits as of large losses. Unusually high profits suggest one of three causes: luck, fraud or dangerously high risk. The first never lasts; the second and third have no place in reputable fund management. But instead of investigating hugely profitable divisions, banks have a tendency, as Mr Breuer has confessed, to leave well alone.

Deutsche Morgan Grenfell's omissions could not be worse news for the unit trust industry. Unit trusts are seen as second in risk only to bank or building society

accounts. They are for people who do not want to speculate on just one of several shares but prefer to spread their risk as widely as possible. They are supposed to be safe and highly supervised.

Coming so soon after the £700,000 fine imposed on the Jardine Fleming investment management group, this latest embarrassment will severely dent confidence in the sector. Internal regulation is clearly not working as it should and the reasons are to do with cultures not structures.

In the Deutsche Morgan Grenfell case, the structures were all in place. But what was the compliance department doing? Where was the chief investment officer? Why did the trusts' trustees not take tougher action? Whatever happened to peer group scrutiny? Suspensions were raised about the level of unlisted company investment as early as April 1996, but far from reducing it, Mr Young seems to have done the opposite.

It is not as if the internal controls were not there. They simply were not applied. This latest debacle has shown that Barings was far from being a one-off, a "rogue" disaster. Both stemmed from a culture of complacency among senior managers.

Deutsche Bank took over Morgan Grenfell eight years ago, so this problem cannot be blamed on the previous regime. Nor should the Germans expect to be dealt with more lightly by threatening to move this business to Frankfurt. It is precisely because such scandals are eventually uncovered and punished in London that the City is still, despite its travails, the best place in Europe in which to do business. Deutsche Bank has nobody to blame but itself.

A MISS FOR ITALY

Why the black gazelle should be a Roman triumph

Current affairs television in Italy features endless rows of identically sharp-suited intellectuals rhapsodising about the beauty and inevitability of a united Europe. Television beauty contests, we now find out, tell a different story. The Miss Italy contest, normally about as controversial as a pasta-mix commercial, has this year been taken over by the politics of national identity.

The contest is in its last stages and a black woman is heading for tonight's final. Denny Mendez, now christened "the black gazelle of Santo Domingo", only became an Italian citizen four years ago when she came to Italy from the Dominican Republic. Signor Bob Krieger, one of the contest's judges and himself the owner of a not particularly Mediterranean name, was sacked from the panel for telling eight and a half million television viewers that a black woman cannot possibly represent Italy. The women cannot possibly represent Italy. The women of Italy, he said, "all have white skins".

The Miss Italy organisers are standing firm. Signorina Mendez remains in the lists. All the countries on the Mediterranean. Italy must rank as one of the oddest places for an eruption of skin colour politics. Signor Krieger's remarks have ignited the country is convulsed

next week. But however unpleasant and prejudiced some of the League's language, the northerners' argument is with the Government in Rome and not with immigrants of a different colour.

There are no purely white West European societies and probably never have been. Least of all have they existed around that great marine mixing bowl of populations, the Mediterranean. Italy hosts perhaps a million immigrants and at least half a million *clandestini* drawn from the Maghreb, Africa and Central Europe. When the sun shines in Rome, the men festooned with sunglasses for sale are not Italians but dark-skinned members of that more multinational, elusive tribe, the one which always plies its trades on the pavement.

Any claim of Italian racial purity ignores the peninsula's history. Rome was the hob of an Empire whose vast and flexible strength depended almost wholly on co-opting conquered races. During the 3rd century, one Emperor was a Syrian, another an Arab and a third an African. That African, Septimius Severus, was raised to the highest office by legionaries from what is now Hungary and died in York after repairing Hadrian's Wall. That was just the beginning of the

US intervention in southern Iraq

From Mrs Elizabeth Young

Sir, Do we have, in the attack by United States forces on targets in southern Iraq (leading articles, September 2, 3, 4), the outward sign of a paradigm-shift in international relations? At the close of the Cold War, President Bush sought to institute a "New World Order" in which the United States would exercise world leadership through the United Nations. Today, both presidential candidates in the United States seem to want something different, and both express contempt for that irreplaceable institution, the United Nations.

What Mr Clinton and Mr Dole now propose has been heralded by the former's repeated remark, that the United States would in future operate "multilaterally if we can, unilaterally if we must".

The attacks on southern Iraq coincided with the annual conference of the International Institute for Strategic Studies which I attended in Dresden. With remarkably good timing, we were examining "Alliances and international security". Discussion of course turned to whether the United States was now seeking quasi-imperial power with obedient client states rather than sovereign and willing allies, and to what extent the "counter-proliferation programme" would encourage, indeed enable, this ambition.

The consensus was that the attacks on Iraq were "unilateral": the missiles were launched, pre-emptively, not from some ally's territory, but from United States platforms, without multilateral agreement or international legitimacy.

Yours etc,
ELIZABETH YOUNG,
100 Bayswater Road, W2,
September 5.

From Mr Rodney E. B. Atkinson

Sir, The British and American case for intervention to protect the Kurds is under attack by those (including, it seems, the Gulf War ally, France) who see the Kurdish North as an integral part of a sovereign Iraq.

However, the historical background to the creation of modern-day Iraq (by the British) casts considerable doubt on this claim. When we, as the colonial power, installed Faisal as King in 1921 we relied to some extent on a referendum which we claimed gave massive support to the new ruler. In fact the "support" was far from overwhelming: in particular the Kurds of Sulaimaniya abstained from voting and those in Kirkuk rejected Faisal completely.

Britain was surely wrong to draw lines in the sand in 1921 and ignore the Kurds' wishes, just as Saddam and some countries today are quite wrong to regard Kurdish land as part of sovereign Iraq. History would suggest that the Americans can rely on rather more than just moral indignation at Saddam's behaviour. There is both a moral and a democratic justification for their intervention.

Yours etc,
RODNEY E. B. ATKINSON,
Alderley, Meadowfield Road,
Stocksfield, Northumberland,
September 5.

University funding

From Professor Sir Graham Hills, FRSE

Sir, I was astonished to read the letter of Mr Nicholas O'Shaughnessy from the Judge Institute of Management Studies of Cambridge University (September 3), berating the world for not heaping even more wealth upon Oxford and Cambridge.

Is it any wonder that with academic salaries of this kind this country is no longer able to afford to maintain its university system in the style to which it believed it had become accustomed?

The reason why the University of Chicago, which he so admires, can afford Nobel Prize winners is simply that it manages its business more effectively.

It charges sensible fees which enable it to earn its living, to pay good salaries and otherwise to invest in its future. Cambridge University by contrast and all the other British universities more so, live on welfare.

So what can they expect? Their dependence on government handouts is shameful — a state of dependency which we can only hope the Dearing committee will rectify. How can our once great and independent universities flourish if they charge cut-price fees and compete with one another in order to do so?

The remedy for this sad state of affairs and its concomitant intellectual malaise is to disestablish the universities, to let them charge the economic rate for their services to their students and to government, and to return once again to prospering by their own endeavours.

Let the Government subsidise the students, if it wishes, but never, never, let it again subsidise the universities. That way lies the enfeeblement of once great institutions.

Yours faithfully,
GRAHAM HILLS
(Vice-Chancellor,
University of Strathclyde, 1980-91),
Sunnyside of Threepwood,
Lairg Threepwood, Beith, Ayrshire,
September 4.

Church's Christmas poster 'outrage'

From Mr Jeremy M. J. Booker

Sir, In my opinion, the new Christmas poster campaign by The Churches Advertising Network (report and leading article, September 5) is bound to appeal to the youth of this country, for whom a Christian upbringing is now the exception rather than the rule.

The message conveyed by your front-page story seems to be that the Church of England is incapable of communicating with the Christians of tomorrow and that it is also intolerant of contemporary methods of communication.

In our increasingly secular and pluralistic society, the Church must surely make full use of the God-given gifts of those Christians skilled in communication and advertising aimed at young people.

The outrage expressed by the Archbishop of York might be appeased if he were to recall that there will be "more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent", and that Jesus taught that "no one comes to the Father except through me". Who are we to judge the methods by which our Lord may choose to reach those who have yet to hear the gospel?

In the meantime, I await the day when the gospel, rather than the views of those willing to emphasise the divisions in the Church, is front-page news.

Yours faithfully,
JEREMY M. J. BOOKER,
76a St George's Square, SW1,
September 5.

From Mr Duncan Banks

Sir, Why, when the Church tries to do the job it is supposed to do by speaking in the language of the people and presenting the truth about a baby from Bethlehem whose life split history in two, does it spoil everything with internal bickering and complaining?

How can the Archbishop of York say that this brilliant new advertising campaign is "a step too far" when all that it does is to tell it as it was, in a way that the average person on the street can understand and respond to?

Yours sincerely,
DUNCAN BANKS (Minister,
Banbury Community Church),
24 Crouch Hill Road,
Banbury, Oxfordshire,
September 5.

From Mr David Lindley

Sir, My friend Martin, who runs the local secondhand bookshop, says he can't keep his philosophy shelves filled. As soon as he gets new stock,

word seems to get around and the young people in town descend on him. We agree that there is a great hunger for truth in the world that is not satisfied by a faithless Church.

The Church's latest attempt to "engage" with young people will fail, as all previous attempts have failed. In accommodating itself to the superficialities of the world it betrays those already disillusioned with a lack of seriousness about serious things. It also betrays the faithful, who love God but can no longer find in the Church a community of mind among whom they may worship. The "New Accommodated Church" betrays the faithless and the faithful alike.

The Church is the oldest corporate organisation in the world, with one powerful and singular message. Someone in the advertising department has forgotten what that is. In most organisations this usually means that the Boss is no longer in charge.

Yours faithfully,
D. LINDLEY,
6 Willow Grove,
Long Itchington, Warwickshire,
September 6.

From the Reverend Richard Dorman

Sir, Three cheers for The Churches Advertising Network. Their work over the last two years has been increasingly bold and progressive, which is what advertising is about, but it is also faithful to the truth and to its subject.

A clever or humorous advert is no "gimmick", as the Reverend John Broadhurst has termed their latest campaign. If it faithfully represents its subject, the new poster does not plumb all the depths of Christmas, but it does touch quite genuinely on part of the reality of incarnation. This reality of Jesus's impact on everyday life is certainly what the world is interested in.

The Church needs a good dose of humour: clergy all too easily get used to the black or grey dress of our every day lives, and forget how drab we become. My favourite church noticeboard slogans include one from an Anglican church near the Angel, "Coming here every Sunday — The Forgiveness" (courtesy Clint Eastwood). Two others are from an Elin church in Harlesden: "Sermons delivered hot in 20 minutes — or your money back" (showing a large slice of pizza) and "Unlike the Post Office, we have two collections on Sundays".

I remain, yours impressed,
RICHARD DORMAN,
Holy Trinity Vicarage,
1 Sydenham Park Road, SE26,
September 5.

personal orders in 1937, which, in accordance with Article 37 of the 1947 Italian Peace Treaty with the UN, should have been returned within 18 months.

Ethiopians are currently agitating for the long-overdue restitution of this ancient 24-metre-high stele. The Ethiopian Federal Parliament and the local Parliament of the Tigré administrative region have this year both demanded its return, and 15,000 citizens of Aksum recently signed a petition supporting this request.

Yours sincerely,
RICHARD PANKHURST,
As from: Addis Ababa University,
Institute of Ethiopian Studies,
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia,
September 5.

Italy's Fascist past

From Professor Richard Pankhurst

Sir, Woodrow Wyatt's otherwise impressive article, "Padania riddles through" (September 3), omits any reference to postwar Italy's signal failure to come to terms with its Fascist past. It is only this year, as a result of the tireless efforts of Professor Angelo Del Boca (a historian of Italian colonial Africa), that the Italian Ministry of Defence has finally admitted the fact, long well-known outside Italy, that the Italian Air Force employed poison gas during the invasion of Ethiopia in 1935-36.

Italy, it is worthy of note, has still not restored to Ethiopia the historic Aksum obelisk, looted on Mussolini's

Travelling miserably

From Lord Tugendhat

Sir, Last week I drove 636 miles on autoroutes from one end of France to the other without encountering a single cone. Many others must have had a similar experience during August.

How far would it be possible to drive on the British motorway system before running into roadworks? Not only travellers and transporters suffer from the inadequacies of our motorways but also those through whose towns and villages the excess traffic passes.

Yours sincerely,
CHRISTOPHER TUGENDHAT,
House of Lords,
September 2.

At arm's length

From Mr J. A. Cooper

Sir, Surely Mr J. R. Thompson [letter, September 2; see also letters, September 5] asked for six yards of ribbon, settled for six metres but received 12 cubits.

Yours sincerely,
J. A. COOPER,
Hexton Manor,
Nr Hitchin, Hertfordshire,
September 2.

Top of their class

From Professor J. N. Adams, FBA

Sir, "Tomorrow sees the end, for now, of the school league-table season", writes John O'Leary (Education, August 30).

Those of us who are fans of this exciting new summer sport become rather depressed at the end of the season. Would it not be possible for *The Times* to provide a Schools' Fantasy League to keep us going through the off-season?

Yours faithfully,
J. N. ADAMS,
University of Reading,
September 2.

Sibling society

From Miss Mary Kenny

Sir, There is an alternative explanation for Margaret Thatcher's high achievement in spite of being "merely the younger sister" in her family of two ("Are some people born to succeed?", Valerie Grove, August 27). Margaret Thatcher had no brothers, and girls born into a family without brothers (or where the brothers have died) tend to achieve more highly. It seems as though the father "transfers" his ambitions for a son onto a girl in the family.

Margaret Thatcher, Indira Gandhi and Golda Meir were all, in effect, brotherless: Mrs Gandhi had a young brother who died and Mrs Meir's four infant male siblings died (which tells us something about male infant mortality in Kiev in the 1890s).

As Alfred Adler long ago established, place in the family is significant, but so is sex. For the record, I am the last of four (two boys, two girls), born ten years after my nearest sibling.

From Mr Peter Sherry

Sir, I was intrigued to see amongst the list of "only children" in Valerie Grove's entertaining article, the names of former Prime Minister Sir Edward Heath, the elder of two boys, along with impresario Sir Cameron Mackintosh, the brother of theatrical agent Robert Mackintosh.

Yours faithfully,
P. SHERRY,
109 Milldam Road, Islington, NI.

From Mrs Jennifer Harding

Sir, Valerie Grove cites Roald Dahl as an only child. In fact, according to the family tree published in his *Memories with Food or Gipsy House* (Viking, 1991), he was the second of four surviving children, and there were also two children by his father's previous marriage.

Yours faithfully,
JENNIFER HARDING,
Roodenburgstraat 5,
2313 HH Leiden, The Netherlands,
November 28.



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COURT CIRCULAR

BUCKINGHAM PALACE September 6: The Duke of York today visited Dorset and was received by Major General Mark Bond (Viceroy)...



The sculptor Sir Anthony Caro has created this massive abstract from styrofoam for a former church that now houses artists' studios in north London. Forest will be officially unveiled today at the Florence Trust Studios

Forthcoming marriages

Mr P.E. Birrell and Miss E.J. Burgess The engagement is announced between Paul Birrell, elder son of Mr and Mrs Keith Birrell...

Marriages

Dr M.A.B. Crow and Miss A.M. Lovelock The marriage took place on Saturday, August 31, 1996, at the Friary, Chisworth...

Dinners

English-Speaking Union Mr Michael Tanner, Dean of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, was the speaker at a literary dinner held last night in the Old Library of Pembroke College...

Birthdays

TODAY: Mr John Baxter, Head Master, Wells Cathedral School, 57; Major Sir William Wrixon-Becher, 81; Professor Malcolm Bradbury, novelist, 64; Lord Charteris of Amisfield, 83; Mr Kevin Curran, cricketer, 57; Mr J. Paul Getty II, KBE, philanthropist, 64; Mr Peter Gill, stage director, 57; Mr Christopher Green, former chief executive, English Heritage, 53; Miss M.G. Hampshire, former Principal, Cheltenham Ladies' College, 78; Miss Diana Hoyer, former chairwoman, European Parliamentary Labour Party, 47; Lord Jenkin of Roding, 70; Mr Elia Kazan, author, producer and director, 87; Mr Justice Ian Kennedy, 60; the Marquess of Londonderry, 52; Sir Douglas Llewellyn, former chairman, HM Board of Customs and Excise, 73; Professor Sir Brian Pippard, physicist, 70; Mr Gordon Richards, racehorse trainer, 66; Mr Michael Robbins, former president, Society of Antiquaries of London, 81; Sir Neil Shields, former chairman, Commission for the New Towns, 77; Major J. B. Smith, former Governor, Ford Prison, 63; Air Marshal Sir John Whitley, 91; Mr Bruce Yardley, cricketer, 49.

Anniversaries

TODAY BIRTHS: Queen Elizabeth I, reigned 1558-1603, Greenwich Palace, 1533; Clarence James Dennis, Australian poet, 1876; Dame Edith Sitwell, poet, Scarborough, 1887; Laura Ashley, designer, Merthyr Tydfil, 1925; Buddy Holly, singer, Lubbock, Texas, 1936; DEATHS: Catherine Parr, sixth wife of King Henry VIII, Sudley Castle, Gloucestershire, 1548; John Armstrong, physician and poet, London, 1779; William Holman Hunt, painter, London, 1910; C.B. Fry, cricketer, London, 1926; The Russians were defeated by Napoleon at Borodino, 1812. Tomorrow BIRTHS: King Richard I, reigned 1099-99, Oxford, 1157; Antonin Dvofak, composer, Nelahozeves, Czechoslovakia, 1841; Siegfried Sassoon, poet and novelist, Brenthley, Kent, 1886; Peter Sellers, actor, London, 1925. DEATHS: Ann Lee, founder of the American sect of Shakers, Waterbury, Vermont, 1789; Faisal I, King of Iraq 1921-33, Bern, 1933; Richard Strauss, composer, Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany, 1949; Keith Moon, rock drummer, London, 1978. Johannsburg was founded, 1886. The first V2 flying bombs landed in Britain, 1944. Richard Nixon, former American President, was pardoned by President Ford over the Watergate affair, 1974.

School announcements

Epson College The Michaelmas Term begins tomorrow with 650 pupils at the College. We welcome the first girls starting at the age of 13, with the College going fully co-educational. Miss Debbie Hills is the first Housemistress. The new library is complete with an elegant and distinguished interior created from the old gymnasium. There are 30 study spaces and links with all modern technology. The quadrangle has also been redesigned. Mr Michael Walker becomes Housemaster of Robinson House, taking over from Mr Neil Laing. Dr Derek Mical takes over as Head of Physics on the retirement of Mr George Buckley. Mr Andy Wolstenholme will be the Director of Physical Education and Master in Charge of Rugby on the retirement of Mr Peter Benson. The Head of School for the term is Tom Wigglesworth. There will be performances in school of Annie on November 21, 22 and 23, at 7.45pm. St Nicholas' Stalls will be held in the Sports Hall on Saturday, November 30, from 2.00pm. Parents, Old Girls and friends of the school are very welcome to attend. King's School, Bruton Term starts at King's School on Monday, September 9. John Thompson (Bruton School) is Head of School (Wolborough Hill) is Captain of Rugby. Mr A.B. Leach is Deputy Headmaster and Mr G.J. Evans is Second Master. An Open Day will be held on Saturday, October 5, from 10.30am to 1.00pm. Girls Sixth Form Scholarships will take place on November 18 and 19. Term ends with the Carol Service on Friday, December 13. The School congratulates its Old Boy Cricketers on winning the Brewers Cup final. Kings' College School, Wimbledon Term began on Wednesday, September 4, at Kings' College School. Dr Christopher Ray took up the post of Director of Studies following the appointment of Mr Kenneth Durham as Headmaster of University College School, Mr Norman Isaacs, Head of Modern Languages until 1995, has retired after a long career at KCS. The Captain of School is James Butler and the Vice-Captain is Robert Whitman. The Captain of Rugby is Douglas Law. During this academic year the school celebrates the centenary of its move from the College in the Strand to Wimbledon. A programme of special events has been arranged. Details of which are available from the school (tel: 0181 255 5300). This term Newer the Sinner, the school's production from the Edinburgh Festival, will be performed in the Studio Theatre, September 12-14. The Gaudy for Old Boys who left between 1965 and 1969 is on September 21. A gala organ concert will take place on October 16. The Chamber Choir and Orchestra will tour Normandy, October 18-22, after a preview concert on October 10. Salomon Pavey, a collaboration with the National Youth Music Theatre, will be performed at St James's Palace on October 24. The Chamber Choir will sing Evensong at the College in the Strand on November 1. An orchestral concert will be performed at St James's, Plymouth, on November 15. Drama includes The Hapless Days of Your Life, November 19-20. Don't Drink the Water, November 21-23, and the school play The Captain of Köpenick, December 3-6. The Christmas choral concert will be at St Martin-in-the-Fields on December 7 and term will end with the Carol Service in Guildford Cathedral on December 13.

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Tomorrow

Miss Jeannette Allweg, ice-skater, 60; Professor Sir Derek Barton, CBE, chemist, 78; Mr Graham Bradley, cricketer, 56; Sir John D.K. Brown, company director, 83; Mr Ian Davidson, MP, 46; Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, composer, 62; Miss Anne Diamond, broadcaster, 42; Mr Michael Frayn, playwright, 63; Mr Anthony Fromm, management consultant, 77; Mr John Garrett, MP, 65; Mr Fred Jarvis, trade unionist, 72; Sir Denis Lasdun, CH, architect, 82; the Marquess of Linton, 74; Mr Geoff Miller, cricketer, 44; Vice-Admiral Sir Roy Newmann, 60; Mr Jack Rosenthal, playwright, 61; Sir Neil Shields, former chairman, Commission for the New Towns, 77; Professor E.H. Snodgrass, mathematician, 73; Colonel James Stirling, Lord-Lieutenant of Stirling and Falkirk, 60; Dame Guinevere Tilney, former UK representative, UN Commission on Status of Women, 33; Mr A.B. Wilson, former Chief Constable, 70.

Royal engagements

TODAY: Prince Edward, as Trustee of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, will join a gathering of award participants at the end of their pilgrimage to St David's at St David's Comprehensive School, Pembrokeshire, 11.15; will attend a reception and luncheon at the Warple Court Hotel at 12.30 to present award operating licences to all the new Welsh Local Authorities; will attend a service in St David's Cathedral at 2.30 to mark 40 years of the award in Wales; and will visit the probation service award project at Tenby Court House at 4.35 and will visit the South Beach, at 5.05. The Duke of Gloucester will attend a service of rededication and will lay a wreath at the Polish Air Force Association's memorial at RAF Northolt at 12.30.

The Hon Simon Weinstock

A Memorial Concert for the Hon Simon Weinstock will be held at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden on Friday, October 4, at 3pm. Admission will be by ticket only. Those wishing to attend should write to Mrs P. Lewton, 1 Starhope Gate, London W14 1EH.

International Council of Christians and Jews

Sir Sigmund Sternberg, Chairman of the ICCJ Executive Committee, presented to Mrs Mary Robinson, President of Ireland, the Gold Intra-Interfaith Medal, which depicts Peace Through Dialogue, on Wednesday. On Thursday he spoke at the Queen's University in Belfast, and at the Northern Ireland Council of Christians and Jews on Friday. He addressed the Rotary Club of Belfast.

Service dinner

North Irish Horse Colonel J. Leslie presided at a dinner of the North Irish Horse Officers' Dinner Club held last night at Dunmore Camp, Belfast.

Church services tomorrow

DEARBORN CATHEDRAL: 8.15 HC: 9.30 M. Te Deum (D. G. Sturston). Jubilate (Shephard). 10.30 Eucharist. Inland (D. G. Sturston). 11.30 M. Te Deum (D. G. Sturston). 12.30 M. Te Deum (D. G. Sturston). 1.30 M. Te Deum (D. G. Sturston). 2.30 M. Te Deum (D. G. Sturston). 3.30 M. Te Deum (D. G. Sturston). 4.30 M. Te Deum (D. G. Sturston). 5.30 M. Te Deum (D. G. Sturston). 6.30 M. Te Deum (D. G. Sturston). 7.30 M. Te Deum (D. G. Sturston). 8.30 M. Te Deum (D. G. Sturston). 9.30 M. Te Deum (D. G. Sturston). 10.30 M. Te Deum (D. G. Sturston). 11.30 M. Te Deum (D. G. Sturston). 12.30 M. Te Deum (D. G. Sturston). 1.30 M. Te Deum (D. G. Sturston). 2.30 M. Te Deum (D. G. Sturston). 3.30 M. Te Deum (D. G. Sturston). 4.30 M. Te Deum (D. G. Sturston). 5.30 M. Te Deum (D. G. Sturston). 6.30 M. Te Deum (D. G. Sturston). 7.30 M. Te Deum (D. G. Sturston). 8.30 M. Te Deum (D. G. Sturston). 9.30 M. Te Deum (D. G. Sturston). 10.30 M. Te Deum (D. G. Sturston). 11.30 M. Te Deum (D. G. Sturston). 12.30 M. 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NEWS

Runcie feared gay clergy

Lord Runcie feared the influence of homosexuals in the Church of England and was concerned that they might stab him in the back, according to a controversial biography of the former Archbishop of Canterbury.

Pressure on Yeltsin to step down

President Yeltsin came under growing pressure to step down and appoint a replacement to run Russia while he undergoes heart surgery.

Gang leader named

A juvenile, who orchestrated the gang rape of a Japanese student, has been named.

Not quite cricket

The old boys of Lord's turned their noses up as the blueprint for a £2.6 million media centre for Lord's was unwrapped.

Millennium man

The vice-chairman of Chelsea, John Major's favourite soccer club, who is donating £1 million to the Labour party said Tony Blair was the man to take Britain into the Millennium.

Recipe for conflict

A threat by New Forest rangers to ban commercial picking of mushrooms has provoked an outcry from residents.

Elite in Dad's Army

Survivors of a wartime force trained as resistance fighters in the event of German occupation are to receive medals.

Black beauty poses dilemma for Italy

The Miss Italy contest has been hit by a row over whether a black beauty, Denny Mendez, should be excluded.

Boycott campaign

Gerry Adams has thrown his weight behind a campaign by nationalists to shun Protestant shops and companies.

Golden harvest

Treasure, worth £15 million, recovered from the wreck of a Royal Mail steamer that sank in 1882 is to be auctioned.

The souk capital

The intellectual and political capital of the Arab world today is London.

Fran wreaks havoc

At least 11 people were killed and coastal townships left in tatters after Hurricane Fran ripped through North and South Carolina.

Charter stalled

South Africa's Constitutional Court rejected sections of the post-apartheid charter for permanent democracy.

NATURE NOTES



Flesh Fly (Saddamus pestilensis)

Small flesh-eating parasite with a vicious bite. Dictatorial by habit but can be helpful to Democrats. Ignores no-fly zones.

OPINION

Ripe to rot: On labour for Scotland. Devolution has been executing dazzling changes of direction with all the speed, but sadly none of the grace of a downhill ski slalom.

LETTERS

America and Iraq: Christmas poster: African influence on Ancient Greece

COLUMNS

Morgan Jenkins: Nothing in Welsh architecture is more distinctive than the modest temples of Zion that grace the Principality.

OBITUARIES

John Cheek, spokesman for the Falklands during the 1982 war; Christine Pascal, French actress; Admiral José Merino, architect of the overthrow of President Allende of Chile

BUSINESS

Morgan Grenfell: Nervous investors have again withdrawn tens of millions of pounds from three European Morgan Grenfell funds at the centre of an international investigation.

SPORT

Cricket: Leicestershire hold a one-point lead over Surrey with two rounds of matches to be played in the Britannic Assurance county championship.

ARTS

Skyscraper city: The tallest building in Europe could be erected in the middle of the City of London.

SECTIONS

Writer of wrongs: Candida Crewe meets a Belfast novelist. Everlasting love: The Jane Austen cult.

WEEKEND

Controversial biography of Runcie



Books: Frederick Forsyth; A.A.Gill. Going out: What to do and where to go.

10 15

Win a TV and VCR worth £1,600. Meet the man behind Oasis.

VISION

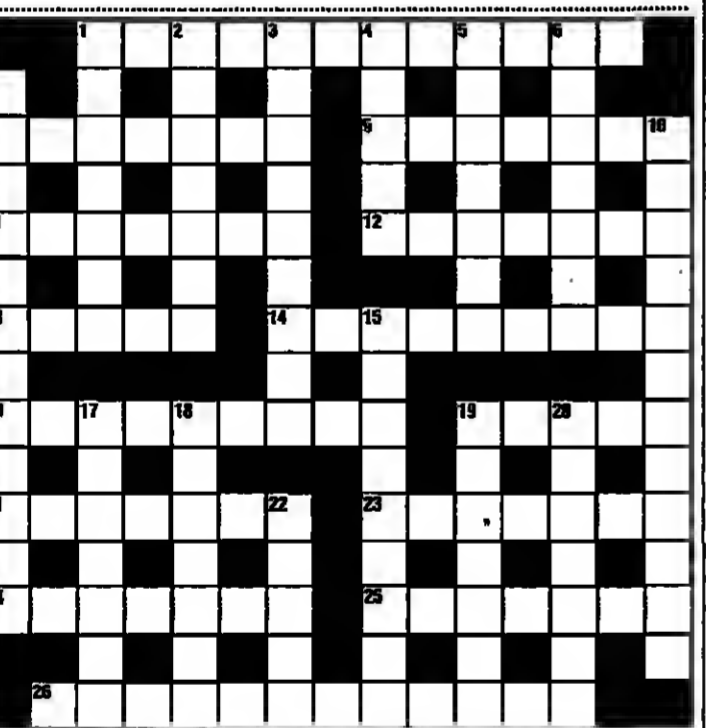


Neverwhere: a three-part urban fantasy. Holed: a golfing black comedy.

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,267

A limited edition, 1970 vintage bottle of Aberlour single malt whisky, the only malt whisky to have twice won the prestigious Gold Medal and Pot Still Trophy at the International Wine & Spirit Competition.

Name/Address



- ACROSS: 1 Finished with glass after big drink, well protected against the cold (6-6). 8 To an auditor it's not at all specialised knowledge (4-3).

Grid for crossword puzzle solutions, including words like STEAMSHIP BASIS, FRINGE MARATHON, OVERLORD OARSIB, REGIMENT PATHWAY, etc.

THE TIMES WEATHER

Table with weather forecasts for various regions like Kent, Sussex, Dorset, etc.

AN ROADWATCH

Table with road traffic information for various areas like London & SE, Midlands, etc.

HOURS OF DARKNESS

Table with sunrise and sunset times for various locations.

HIGH TIDES

Table with high tide times for various locations like London, Bristol, etc.

FORECAST

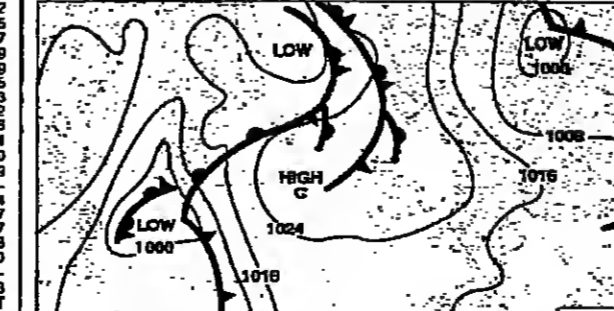
General: England and Wales will have a rather cloudy start with early morning mist or fog clearing during the morning.

AROUND BRITAIN

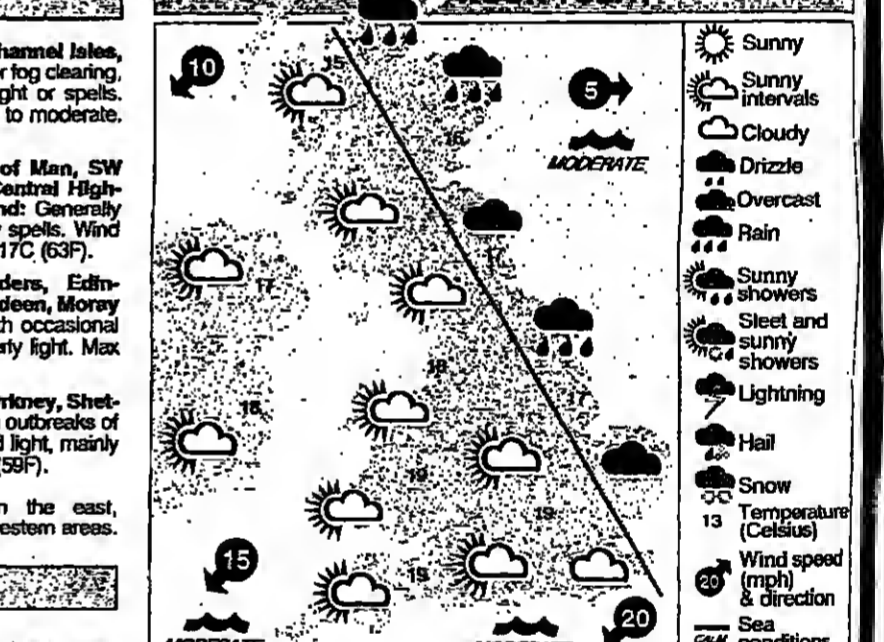
Table with weather forecasts for various parts of Britain like Aberdeen, London, etc.

ABROAD

Table with weather forecasts for various international locations like Alvor, Algiers, etc.



NOON TODAY



CHRISTMAS IN LAPLAND

Advertisement for Lapland Christmas flights, mentioning flights to Rovaniemi and Santa Claus village.

TORONTO OR NEW YORK

Advertisement for Toronto or New York flights, mentioning Concorde supersonic flights.

QE2 AND ORIENT-EXPRESS

Advertisement for QE2 and Orient-Express cruises, mentioning various routes and dates.

ORIANA AND ORIENT-EXPRESS

Advertisement for Oriana and Orient-Express cruises, mentioning Christmas and New Year cruises.

INSIDE SECTION 2 TODAY



EXECUTIVE VOICE Joe Dwyer sees land supply as key to housing recovery PAGE 28

Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday WORKING WEEK John Monks on the eve of the TUC conference PAGE 29



SPORT Hill keeps a wary eye on challengers after spin at Monza PAGES 46-52

THE HIDDEN ASSETS OF NATWEST PAGE 27

BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 7 1996

Morgan Grenfell outflow tops £180m

By Robert Miller

NERVOUS investors have again withdrawn tens of millions of pounds from three European Morgan Grenfell funds at the centre of an international investigation.

will suffer losses. However, a full-page advertisement in newspapers today, intended to reassure private investors, makes no mention of compensation.

Deutsche Bank has taken on its own books the unquoted securities held by the Morgan Grenfell funds at a cost of £180 million. It may have to pay out at least as much again in compensation to some of the 90,000 investors who were attracted to the funds by an apparently exemplary performance track record that lasted until the start of this year.

As The Times reported yesterday, Imro officials are investigating allegations that Mr Young, whose assets have been frozen under a High Court order, used warrants in Xavier Mines, a Canadian drilling company, to secure a loan for all or part of the recent purchase of his £400,000 house in Amersham, Buckinghamshire.

Leading article, page 23 Tempus, page 30 Weekend Money, page 51

Safeway and BP in joint venture

BRITISH PETROLEUM and Safeway are gambling that a mixture of groceries, petrol and alcohol is the recipe for retailing success.

The two companies yesterday announced a £100 million joint venture to build as many as 100 food and fuel sites, each of which will carry the BP and Safeway logos, across the UK. The first is to open next month in Basildon, Essex.

Mr Webb said Safeway expected sales of £20 to £30 per square foot per week from the stores. Analysts were sceptical, noting that Safeway's own superstores have average sales of just over £14 a square foot.

Tempus, page 30

WEEKEND MONEY

32 Anne Ashworth on compensation for unit holders

31,39 The future for investors in the European trusts

32 Borrowers caught in the high rate loan trap

35 Health Insurance guide, Part One. The limits of cover

38 Lessons in investing to cover ever-rising school fees

Prior says sorry to Simpson over pay

By Fraser Nelson

GEORGE SIMPSON, the new managing director of GEC, yesterday received a public apology from Lord Prior, the company's chairman, for the "embarrassment" caused by the public outcry over his pay package, potentially worth up to £10 million over five years.

Lord Prior said the package was not generous, and broadly in line with the pay offered to other chief executives. Asked why details of the package had not featured in the annual accounts, he said that Mr Simpson had agreed to join GEC before the details of his pay were finalised.



Sarah Gregory, marketing manager for Gucci Timepieces, with fake watches that were destroyed yesterday at the British Horological Museum in Nottinghamshire

Factory output starts to stir

By Janet Bush, Economics Correspondent

UK MANUFACTURERS enjoyed a tentative recovery in its very early stages and is far from dramatic. Manufacturing grew 0.5 per cent in the month, having fallen 0.1 per cent in June.

Manufacturing grew 0.5 per cent in the month, having fallen 0.1 per cent in June. Overall industrial production, which includes the North Sea and energy companies, grew 0.5 per cent as well, having dropped 0.9 per cent in June.

The ONS now estimates that industrial production is growing at about 0.5 per cent a year, the first positive estimate since January. Eagerly awaited employment figures from America were published yesterday. The Labour Department reported

Boss with a nose for a smart deal

By Clare Stewart

PAUL GOTLEY'S company makes an "electronic nose" to sniff out exotic chemicals, but he would also appear have a nose for a good deal in spite of issuing a profits warning earlier this year and losing money last year.

and £40,000 from a forerunner of the British Technology Group, a state-owned body in those days. Neotronics has accepted a £23.3 million offer from Zellweger Luwa, a Swiss listed company, which values it at 90p a share cash, almost double the 47p closing price on Thursday. The deal has been recommended by Neotronics directors who speak for 60.5 per cent of the shares, which last night closed at 87p

flammable gases. It operates in 17 countries and reported pre-tax profits of £16.7 million last year. Neotronics, based in Hertfordshire, incurred a loss of £680,000 last year. Mr Gotley said Neotronics had received other bid approaches before but added that the Zellweger approach was of interest because it was a particularly good fit. Neotronics said yesterday that it remained less making although it contin-

Bank of Ireland Mortgages advertisement with illustration of a house and people

Bank of Ireland can fix it for you advertisement with interest rates and contact information

BUSINESS TODAY

Table with financial data including Stock Market Indices, US Rate, London Money, Sterling, and Dollar



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OUSE

Mercury Portfolio Asset Management

Land supply is key to a controlled housing recovery

There have been many recent reports, supported by our own trading experience, which demonstrate that there is some recovery in the housing market. Whilst we have heard this before, there is a significant difference — for the first time since the start of the recession, the trend is sustained.

In spite of modest house price movement, even as a house-builder, we believe the recovery is best facilitated by a low-inflation economy — the boom-bust cycles may have made selling easier for periods of time, but in the long term, provide a difficult environment for sustained trading.

For our business, the housing market and the economy generally, we need a gentle, sustained bounce-back. A vicious circle had been created where the flat market kept house prices artificially low, limiting supply and therefore limiting the number of transactions,

eventually contracting the market as a whole. At this stage, house price inflation of 5 to 7 per cent, a few percentage points above general inflation, is necessary to get the market back into equilibrium, bringing on more supply as people trade up, and, at the same time, creating more demand — so breaking the cycle.

Unusually, the second-hand sector is leading the new homes market in this recovery. What is not surprising is that it is strongest in London and the South East, where house prices had suffered the largest deflation.

Also at this stage, we have found more consumer demand for our detached homes than our smaller compact housing. The expansion of the second-hand market could account for this as homes move out of negative equity, allowing owners to trade up.

The first-time buyer end of the market is lagging behind slightly.

The barrier for first-time buyers entering the market is not cost, but confidence. The profile of this group is therefore changing. They are waiting until they are older, having rented or stayed in the parental home until they are convinced of their job security.

Stagnant prices have meant that they have no urgency to buy and that buying a home is for "nesting" not "investing". In fact this is one of the great myths of the industry. Evidence from countries with expensive housing relative to income ratios such as Japan and Switzerland shows that these are also countries with low inflation. Also, house prices will always tend to rise in line with personal incomes, provided interest rates remain stable — so, in real terms, bricks and mortar is still a worthwhile investment.

Affordability is at its best level for a generation, eg. a single male on average earnings would today



Joe Dwyer

be paying 23 per cent of his income on his mortgage, compared with 63 per cent in 1989. A consequence of this is that first-time buyers are looking for larger homes. We can support this by reviewing the make-up of new home starts: 44 per cent of all new homes built in the UK were detached houses in

the second quarter of this year, compared with 34 per cent in 1992, whereas 23 per cent of new homes in 1992 were terraced, falling to only 17 per cent last quarter.

If we consider the new homes market of today compared with the market when we entered the recession, one of the key differences is that it has moved from a seller's market to a buyer's one. As a consequence, customers have become more discerning. They have more choice and, with slower sales rates, they have more time to buy. Housebuilders have to put more into their offers, packages are tailored to meet the needs of individual purchasers and customer care has become a key driver for the industry.

Perhaps the closest parallel is the car industry which turned itself around in the mid-1980s. As customer choice took hold of the industry, with the influx of the overseas manufacturers, it had

little choice but to transform itself. Features which once did not exist or were paid-for "extras" — and then only supplied reluctantly — became commonplace. Style and presentation became as important if not more so than engineering excellence. A decade later the housebuilding industry is following the same trend.

However, our low-inflation, gentle recovery is under serious threat. Government-published figures show an estimated need for 1.4 million new homes by 2010. To achieve this we need a sufficient supply of land — and this is where the danger lies.

Whilst central government sets targets, planning is predominantly a local issue. There is little legislation to ensure targets are met by local authorities and the appeal system has become so protracted, often taking up to a year, that it is becoming a commercial liability for housebuilders.

Even at this early stage of the recovery land prices are accelerating. The £1 million per acre deals have reappeared, and, although these are still the exception, the indications are that, without the mechanisms to ensure sufficient supplies of land for housing development, we could, once again, be faced with rapid land inflation. It would be ironic if the Government which champions the low-inflation cause continues to ignore the planning issue and, as a consequence, in three years' time we have house prices once again rising out of control.

If this is to be avoided we need action now to address the land supply issue. Only then can we ensure a stable, low-inflation environment which can support a sustained recovery in the housing market.

□ The author is chairman of George Wimpey.

UBS raises house price forecasts

An acceleration of the recovery in the housing market has prompted analysts at UBS, the Swiss-owned bank, to increase their forecast for house price rises this year.

Rob Thomas, UBS housing analyst, now expects prices to rise by 7 per cent, compared with his earlier estimate of 5 per cent for 1996. He has upped his forecast for 1997 from 6 per cent to 10 per cent.

He said the surge in prices would be led by London and southeast England. He expects prices in the capital to rise by 12 per cent this year and 15 per cent next year.

Arco sold

America's Allstate Insurance Company has agreed to sell Allstate Reinsurance Company (Arco), its London reinsurance operation, to QBE Insurance Group of Sydney for an undisclosed sum. Arco, with 1995 net written premiums of \$92 million, is indirectly owned by Allstate.

Frost Group

Frost Group did not incur any exceptional restructuring costs in the six months to June 30, contrary to a report yesterday. Frost does not plan to close any petrol retailing outlets.

Schroders gives warning of uncertain outlook

By OLIVER AUGUST

SCHRODERS, the investment bank, has delivered a warning in an otherwise upbeat interim report of a worsening business climate.

Win Bischoff, the chairman, said: "With elections imminent in the US and UK and with equity markets in those countries testing all-time highs, conditions for our business may become more uncertain. Although the second half started reasonably, it will not be easy to match two successive record years."

In the six months to the end of June 1996, pre-tax profit was £116 million, up from £112 million in the last half and up from £86 million a year ago.

The results disappointed the City, which had forecast a top range for pre-tax profits of £125 million and the bank's share price fell from £14.47 to £13.93.

The asset management arm of Schroders saw its funds rise 13 per cent, primarily because of new inroads in emerging markets. The bank said that investors had shown increasing awareness of the investment opportunities in Asia and Latin America.

Retail fund growth in the UK

was said to be encouraging, taking the division's pre-tax profit from £44 million to £65 million year-on-year. Comparison with the second-half 1995 profits of £49 million highlights the delayed effect on profitability of strong increases in the level of funds under management. In the corporate finance division, profits rose to £51 million from £42 million in the last half year, compared with £63 million a year ago. The bank said that activity in the Asia Pacific operations, which are being restructured to meet strategic objectives, were subdued.

Schroders experienced big moves in its share price this week after the resurgence of persistent takeover speculation. However, it insists that it will remain an independent institution in spite of the continuing consolidation in the industry.

Mr Bischoff said: "Categorically, there is no plan to change the structure of Schroders. I cannot be too explicit on that."

An interim dividend of 4.5p, compared with 4.5p last year, will be paid on October 24.



Win Bischoff, chairman, reported profits of £116 million

Protesters hit AGM at Costain

By OLIVER AUGUST

COSTAIN'S annual meeting was yesterday persistently and violently disrupted by protesters against the Newbury bypass, which is being built by the troubled construction company.

The two-hour meeting was almost entirely devoted to the building of the controversial bypass. Two-thirds of about 300 shareholders present harassed the board and prevented Sir Christopher Benson, the chairman, from reading out his statement by clapping and whistling.

Sir Christopher abandoned his prepared text and allowed the protesters to sweep the order of business aside to question the board. A representative from Inria, the Malaysian group that came to Costain's rescue, was forced to stop his slide presentation shortly after starting.

Alan Lovell, the chief executive, said after the meeting that the "surprising lack of courtesy" had made him feel ashamed of being British.

When Sir Christopher tried to move to the election of directors at least 50 protesters stormed to the front, causing the collapse of the table at which the board was sitting.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Mowlem into profit and planning float

JOHN MOWLEM, the construction group, hopes to float up to 50 per cent of Access Products and Services, the scaffolding and ladders business, early next year. Mowlem's plans were announced together with the group's interim results. Reflecting the effects of its recent restructuring, the company returned to profit in the six months to June, earning a pre-tax profit of £5.3 million (£3.8 million loss). Interim dividend payments resume with a payout of 1p a share.

The improvement comes in the wake of last year's boardroom shake-up, job cuts and the reorganisation of the business into five divisions. Mowlem also shed problem businesses including the loss-making London City Airport. Access Products lifted operating profits by 12 per cent to £7.5 million, helped by a strong overseas performance, while last year's losses of £4.1 million in the main construction division were reduced to £900,000. Mowlem shares rose 6.5p to 87.5p.

Tempus, page 30

Downturn at Laird

THE LAIRD GROUP, the automotive components company, suffered a downturn in profits to £33.4 million before tax from £37.5 million in the half year to the end of June. The company said that the year started slowly in contrast to the exceptionally strong start to 1995, with most of the shortfall in profits occurring in the first quarter. Earnings were 16.8p a share (18.1p). The interim dividend is increased to 4.9p a share from 4.7p.

Irish jobless total falls

THE number of people claiming unemployment benefit in the Irish Republic fell by 1,200 to 284,300 in August, according to seasonally adjusted figures released yesterday by the Central Statistics Office. The unemployment rate eased to 12.5 per cent in August, from 12.6 per cent in July. The figures mark the first fall in unemployment in four months. However, the August figures are still more than 6,000 higher than in the same month last year.

Olivetti defends results

OLIVETTI, the troubled Italian electronics group, insisted yesterday that its first-half results, published earlier this week, were rigorously in order. The announcement came after Renzo Francesconi, a former Olivetti executive, said the figures were misleading. Olivetti confirmed that net debt at the end of June was 1,261 billion lire compared with 775 billion lire at the end of 1995. Olivetti shares, suspended on Thursday, will resume trading on the Milan Stock Exchange on Monday.

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CHANGING TIMES

Nursing homes in merger

By CARL MORTISHED

TAKARE and Court Cavendish injected new life in the depressed nursing home sector yesterday with the announcement of a £252 million merger of their companies. Takare is making an all-paper offer for Court Cavendish, valuing the company at about £64 million, or 235p per share.

Shares in both companies rose on news of the agreed deal. Takare rose 2p to 150.2p while Court Cavendish gained 19p to 235p. The merger terms are 157 Takare shares for every 100 Court Cavendish shares. Takare is forecasting a final dividend of 2.45p, an increase of 44 per cent on the final payout last year.

Keith Bradshaw, chairman of Takare, said the merger would bring together the balance sheet strength of Takare with the acquisition skills of Court Cavendish. Mr Bradshaw will be chairman of the combined entity, to be renamed TC Group. Chai Patel, chairman of Court Cavendish will be chief executive.

The merged business will own 126 nursing homes, comprising 11,742 beds, and the group plans to use its balance sheet to acquire other private nursing home businesses.

Tempus, page 30

NetHold to link with Canal Plus

By ERIC REGULY

ONE of the world's largest pay-TV groups was formed yesterday when Canal Plus of France agreed to merge its TV operations with NetHold, the South African company that launched Europe's first digital broadcasting service in 1995.

The new group will have more than 8.5 million subscribers in Western Europe, Scandinavia and Benelux.

Its main strength will be in France, where Canal Plus is the main pay-TV channel, and in Italy, where NetHold has a 45 per cent stake in Telepiù, the digital TV broadcaster that owns the exclusive rights to live Italian football games. Telepiù will also give the new group a direct link to Kirch Gruppe of Germany, which also owns 45 per cent, and Fininvest, the holding company of Silvio Berlusconi, the former Italian Prime Minister, which owns 10 per cent.

NetHold is owned 50 per cent by Richemont, the South African-controlled luxury goods group whose brands include Cartier and Rothmans, and 50 per cent by MII, a South African pay-TV company. Canal Plus is acquiring 100 per cent of NetHold's capital in exchange for 6.1 million new Canal Plus shares and US\$45 million in cash.

TOURIST RATES

Australia \$	2.07	Bank	1.81
Austria Sch	17.26	Buyers	15.88
Belgium Fr	50.93	Stubs	46.43
Canada C\$	2.57		2.097
Cyprus Cyp£	0.7534		0.8884
Denmark Kr	9.56		8.76
Finland Mk	7.83		6.98
France Fr	6.57		7.72
Germany Dm	2.481		2.271
Greece Dr	387		362
Hong Kong \$	12.78		11.78
Iceland Is	115		96
Ireland P£	1.016		0.996
Israel S\$	5.32		4.97
Italy Lit	2476		2820
Japan Yen	168.20		162.30
Malta	0.800		0.545
Netherlands Gld	2.763		2.333
New Zealand \$	2.40		2.18
Norway Kr	10.56		9.78
Portugal Esc	209.50		231.00
S Africa R	7.64		8.94
Spain Ptas	203.00		190.00
Sweden Kr	11.03		10.23
Switzerland Fr	2.023		1.943
Turkey Lira	189152		141152
USA \$	1.895		1.536

Rates for small denomination bank notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Different rates apply to traveller's cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

THE SUNDAYTIMES

Morgan's meltdown

Peter Young was last week a star fund manager earning £300,000 a year. Today he has been benched the reputation of Morgan Grenfell and undermined confidence in the British fund management industry.

The inside story on the scandal at Morgan Grenfell. In The Sunday Times tomorrow

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A WORKING WEEK FOR: JOHN MONKS

From damage limitation to preserving identity

On the eve of the TUC conference, Philip Bassett meets the General Secretary who is keeping peace and seeking change

Monday
Tuesday
Wednesday
Thursday
Friday

WHEN one of John Monks's predecessors as General Secretary of the Trades Union Congress was tackled by an irate delegate because that year's annual TUC conference was so uninteresting, he replied: "Thanks very much."

on half their highpoint of 13 million in 1979 — to bat at the TUC's conference not just on their members' behalf, but for all those people at work who feel insecure and disenfranchised by global competition and workforce flexibility, and the two million-plus unemployed.

"We are not a party political organisation," Mr Monks stresses. "I don't see the TUC playing any particular role in the election — though some unions affiliated to the Labour Party clearly will."

Mr Monks will try to make that the priority for the TUC, as he moves on Monday from dealing with issues such as the growth of part-time working, on Tuesday to the impact on Britain of European-style works councils and economic and monetary union, on Wednesday to full employment and on Thursday to employment legislation.

"I recognise that at the last election half of all trade unionists voted for parties other than Labour," Mr Monks says. However, he is clear too on what he and the TUC want: "But I do have a preference: I look forward to a Labour victory."

But Mr Blair will be in Blackpool, arriving on Tuesday for a private dinner with the TUC General Council, and for a working breakfast the next morning. Though he will not appear in the conference hall, his visit will still be the highlight of the week, for the media especially.

The TUC's future does not depend on the election of Labour

For the past week, Mr Monks — now, at 51, four years into the job of leading Britain's unions — has been carrying out the final careful preparations for a conference next week at which every aspect of the unions' behaviour will be carefully scrutinised for its potential electoral impact on Tony Blair and new Labour.

Central to that view will be one primary issue — Labour's plan, originally proposed by the trade unions, to introduce a statutory national minimum wage. Other issues will also generate heat: in spite of the toning down of the policy resolution on it at pre-conference inter-union sessions this week, future employment law under an incoming Labour government will still see stinging attacks on Tony Blair from left-wing union leaders, most notably Arthur Scargill, the miners' president and head of his own breakaway political party.

Today he will briefly shrug off the cares of the last run-in to the start of the conference in the faded vulgar splendour of Blackpool's Winter Gardens on Monday morning by joining other members of the TUC's governing General Council to play cricket against the national news media's industrial correspondents in a traditional annual fixture where the inspirational ingenuity of the scorers usually far exceeds that of the players.

But it is the minimum wage, to be debated on Wednesday afternoon, which will overshadow all else — the issue which has been used to divide the unions fundamentally. Now it is a touchstone — a defining difference between Labour and the Conservatives, with the only argument on how it is introduced, and at what level.



John Monks, beside a bust of Ernest Bevin, the trade union leader and postwar Labour Foreign Secretary, will be thrust into the media spotlight

uncomfortable. "I've got a tidy mind," he says. "I would have preferred not to have the Union-NUM motion."

Mr Monks's spin-doctors already have their dismissals in place — ready to discount whatever the unions may decide, emphasising that Labour has determined its policy on a minimum wage, which it will implement if elected to government.

That has been my main thrust as General Secretary. Nevertheless, if Labour does win, Mr Monks wants to see in practice European-style "social partnership", with the social partners — employers and employees — having a role and responsibilities in relevant areas.

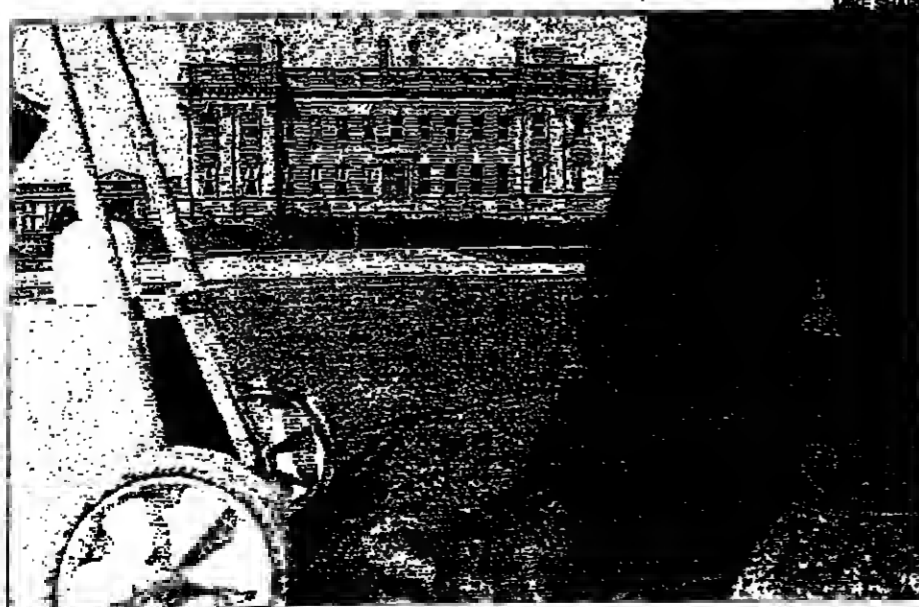
But John Monks does not see a minimum wage, signing the European social chapter, new rights to representation and recognition at work and the advent of social partnership, which a Blair-led Labour government would bring, either as a return to the old-style corporatism and supposed union power of the 1960s and 1970s, or as the "new danger" which the Conservatives are warning against with new Labour.

Monday
Tuesday
Wednesday
Thursday
Friday

HIDDEN ASSETS
A lavish Archer plot in the country with the mystery of a whale skeleton

Joanna Pitman discovers a chequered history behind the walls at NatWest Group's magnificent Heythrop Park

The prospect of having to attend a three-day product launch, a residential staff motivation course or outdoor team-building training does not normally bring the cockles of the heart. But the gloom should lift if that vent is to be held at Heythrop Park, the magnificent Baroque house owned by the NatWest Group and situated in a glorious 450-acre estate, five miles northeast of Oxford.



The 18th-century Heythrop Park typifies the finest examples of Baroque architecture

years of his Grand Tour in Italy, honing his tastes and ideas of classical architecture. Back in Oxfordshire, Archer created for him a house embellished with Italian ornamentation, with a facade and interiors appropriate for his new wife, Countess Adelaide Rossini, and with commanding views from all of the main rooms down onto sweeping parkland. The house, and

magnificence came to a disastrous end in a fire in 1831 which left only the shell of the main building and the two wings standing. The house remained empty for 40 years until it was bought in 1870 by Thomas Brassey, the railway engineer. Brassey gave it to his son, Albert, who spent two years restoring the house and grounds to something of their former glory.

Small text at the bottom of the page, likely a byline or publication information.

Advertisement for Woolwich Direct mortgage. Text includes: "It's easy to save on your mortgage.", "No arrangement fee", "3% discount", "No valuation fee", "No legal fees", "Move to Woolwich Direct.", "3.99% (4.0% APR)", "0645 75 75 75", "WOOLWICH DIRECT".



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DIRECT SAVINGS 34

Buying car insurance by telephone

WEEKEND MONEY

INSTANT ACCESS 36

Some products are blending the definition



Jill Insley, Caroline Merrell and Anne Ashworth on the affair casting a shadow over unit trusts

Investor anger grows over Morgan Grenfell response

New manager restructures troubled funds

As Morgan Grenfell took steps to restore its credibility this week, Stuart Mitchell, the newly appointed manager of the troubled European funds, yesterday told The Times: "These kind of things can happen even with the best controls. Our compliance controls are as rigorous or more so as you would find in any organisation in the City."

Mr Mitchell, who replaces the now suspended Peter Young, hopes his untarnished reputation and the strong performance of the funds he has managed will reassure investors. Whether this will be sufficient remains to be seen. Mr Young had a stellar reputation until his fall from grace, and his funds had performed exceedingly well until quite recently.

Deutsche Bank Morgan Grenfell's parent, has already injected £180 million to buy all the unquoted shares in the funds where there had been questions about pricing. The amount represents about 125 per cent of the portfolios.

Mr Mitchell maintains that, because Deutsche Bank has relieved him of the questionable stocks and because of the strong cash position, he has not been forced to sell shares. "I don't see a situation where I will have to dump stock in the market to generate cash."

Mr Mitchell said both funds had cash holdings of about 22 per cent when he arrived and that redemptions had been lower than expected. "I would expect them to be about 15 per cent over the next few weeks."



Mitchell: unhurried review

He has already started his restructuring moves, including "some top-slicing" of some large technology companies. "This is being done with no impact on pricing. I think these are good funds, and I will only want to change about 15 to 20 per cent of the holdings. I'm not going to rush into anything. I will slowly go through each stock individually before I act. The fund performance should not in any way be affected by the crisis."

It is possible that management of the UK asset management operations will shift to Frankfurt to allow Deutsche Bank to have greater control. If this happens, Mr Mitchell says investors need not worry. "Nothing changes. We will carry on as a team. There may be a greater eye on our work from Deutsche Bank in Germany, but it won't affect the way we do research or manage the portfolios."

KAREN ZAGOR



Antony Levi says the answers given by the helpline were inadequate and that compensation should be provided

Anger is growing among the 90,000 investors in the three Morgan Grenfell European trusts this weekend over not only the disaster that has overtaken their investment but also their treatment by the blue-blooded fund manager.

One distressed investor who contacted Weekend Money summed up their situation. "As I would rather not sell at a loss now, I am staying aboard. But what are the prospects for the fund? All this bad publicity will mean that nobody will want to invest in the fund and the performance will deteriorate further."

Antony Levi, fashion distributor, was one of many investors voicing dissatisfaction at the negligible amount of information available from Morgan Grenfell. He said: "The answers given by the helpline were inadequate. For example, I asked when the problems had first surfaced. Morgan Grenfell claimed that it had known nothing until last Friday. It is, however, clear that things were going very badly wrong in the early summer. This inability to communicate is typical. When I invested some more cash in the fund earlier this year, the acknowledgment was very slow in arriving."

Mr Levi added: "There is also the question of compensation. Since it is clear that things have been going wrong at these funds for some six months, we should be compensated for our losses over that period."

This weekend Morgan Grenfell has written to investors, apologising and outlining its actions in suspending its

three problem funds, European Growth and Europa Fund and European Capital Growth, a Dublin investment, jointly worth £1.4 billion. Morgan Grenfell suspended dealings in these funds on Monday when it became worried about the values attached to many of their investments. Dealings resumed on Thursday.

The brief letters to investors make it clear that Morgan Grenfell will meet its liabilities in respect of any irregularities in the funds.

However, the issue of compensation seems unclear with Morgan Grenfell making contradictory statements on the issue (see page 39).

As the investigation into the affair gathered pace, advisers recommended that investors in the three trusts should not sell their units until the situation was clarified. Most expressed the view that Deutsche Bank, Morgan Grenfell's parent, had sufficiently deep pockets to meet the bill.

Ian Millward of Chase de Vere, the Bath investment advisers, said: "Morgan Grenfell has said it will recompense any losses resulting from pricing irregularities. Investors should sit tight until we know the results of the investigation."

During the first six months of this year, the performance of other European funds was largely flat. The Morgan Grenfell trusts fell by some 14 per cent. The outlook for the future is uncertain, as it seems likely that investors will shun the funds, deterred by this week's events.

Meanwhile the whole affair has cast a shadow over the huge unit trust industry which at the end of July this year was

worth £123 billion. For more than 60 years, unit trusts have earned a reputation as a safe home for investors taking their first steps into the stock market. This hard-won reputation is at risk. The discovery that Morgan Grenfell has invested hundreds of millions of pounds in little-known companies unquoted on any stock exchange has raised doubts about the safeguards intended to protect investors.

Peter Young, the manager of the trusts also suspended on

Monday, invested nearly 30 per cent of the £788 million European Growth fund in unquoted companies. Unit trust managers are limited to investing a maximum of 10 per cent of their portfolio's value in unlisted stocks. Mr Young exploited a loophole which allows unit trusts to hold more than 10 per cent, provided the companies concerned have stated their intention to list within 12 months.

Most unit trust managers steer well clear of unlisted

companies, because their shares are difficult to sell or value accurately. A fund manager from another company says: "It's very uncommon to hold unquoted stocks. There's no structured market for them, and unless you can find a buyer, they are unsellable. It's hell of a liability."

Morgan Grenfell has admitted that it knew Mr Young had invested up to one third of the European Growth portfolio in unlisted securities during the year. It was also aware that he

had breached Securities and Investments Board regulation 5.14 on three occasions. This rule stipulates that a fund may own no more than 10 per cent of any company.

A spokesman for Morgan Grenfell said: "We were aware of the content of the portfolio. There was nothing at that stage to say there was anything wrong with the content." However, Deutsche Bank has already paid up to £200 million into the three funds to

continued on page 39, col 1

Competitors check their books

The crisis at Morgan Grenfell has led other leading unit trusts groups to review their portfolios to check whether the holdings of unquoted stocks breached the rules. All appear to have a clean bill of health. Meanwhile, managers reported that they were receiving funds from disaffected Morgan Grenfell investors (Jill Insley writes).

Rachel Medill, spokeswoman for M&G, says: "I think every unit trust group looks at what is happening to Morgan Grenfell and shakes in its shoes. We are all looking around to make sure it's not happening to us, even if it is as little as checking how much unlisted stock is in our portfolio. It is a natural thing to do." Both M&G and Perpetual say they have just undergone compliance visits from their regulator, the Investment Management Regulatory Organisation, that failed to find any problems. Clive Boothman, chief executive of Schroders, says the investment management company double-checked the size of holdings in unquoted stocks in every fund on Tuesday. He said: "We have done this not only for UK unit trusts but funds worldwide. The trawl showed we have no more than 1 per cent in unquoted stocks." He says the company may also review how unquoted stocks are valued.

Peter Young, the fund manager at the centre of the Morgan Grenfell problem, worked for Mercury Asset Management until 1991. Mercury's head of compliance Charles Farquharson says: "We have highly developed monitoring systems designed to flag any breaches." He says the company's fund management has been set up to be transparent to all concerned. All fund

managers must buy holdings through the company's centralised dealing operation, stock is priced by independent sources and fund management staff work in teams so investment decisions can be questioned continually. Investment companies have already detected an increase in money being transferred from Morgan Grenfell. This perhaps suggests the loss of confidence in units is so far limited to Morgan.

However, investors who are nervous about their choice of investment should ask to see the make-up of their fund's portfolio and performance figures, and check whether these fit the description of the fund's investment aims. A fund which is described as low risk, for example, should not be swooping up and down in value.

It is also worth checking whether the investment company concerned has bought indemnity insurance to cover malpractice. Peter Hargreaves, managing director of Hargreaves Lansdown, the independent financial adviser of Bristol, said that Deutsche Bank's injection of £180 million to stem investors' losses has shown the value of investing in a company with deep pockets: "Investors may in future prefer to stick with a well-known company with substantial resources like Schroder and Fidelity," he said.

Weekend Money is edited by Anne Ashworth

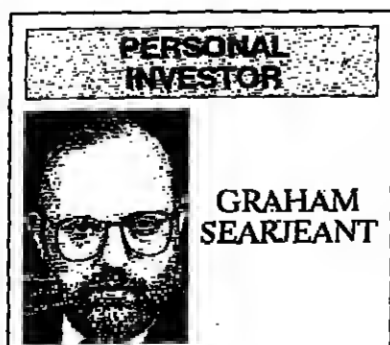
Still better than the mattress

Yes, it's true. There really are investors who bailed out of Kepit, fed up with the sagging continental investment trust, to find a new "safer" home for their money in Morgan Grenfell's European Growth (MGE) unit trust. There may well be many. Both were well promoted, much touted by investment advisers, and favourably featured in the press. Disillusioned investors may be tempted to reach for the mattress. With advisers and unit managers, they should rather recall some basic rules. High returns imply risks. Bright ideas fade fast. And risks can be cut via a spread of liquid stocks, the *raison d'être* of unit trusts.

Bizarrely, MGE was touted as a play-safe diversification. In 1995, the London market had such a good run that most observers rightly doubted it could do so well this year. If all your eggs are in a UK basket, why not spread the risk? For PEP investors, the easy answer is continental Europe, where you can invest freely.

This was a sensible idea, even if continental share prices often parallel the UK more closely than Wall Street, Tokyo or emerging markets. Since the start of 1993, the FT-SE Eurotrak 100 index has still outpaced London's FT-SE 100 by about 15 per cent. So far this year, the Eurotrak is up about 10 per cent against the FT-SE's 5, although a rising pound has taken away the difference for sterling investors.

Even after recent losses, long-term investors in MGE have beaten the Eurotrak index spectacularly, thanks to



GRAHAM SEARJEANT

Peter Young, its ex-manager. That seeming consistency explains why the fund was so widely recommended and bought. But the greatest weight of MGE's unitholders have only come in just in time for the fall. The weight of new money contributed to that fall, making it harder to beat the averages without taking greater risks. Many of the advisers and investors who jumped in knew that Mr Young's policy was extremely adventurous. So did senior Morgan Grenfell managers. Kepit is also eccentric, focusing to its disadvantage on the bright idea of privatisation.

Such policies are unsuited to modest PEP investors testing continental waters for the first time. What did all concerned think they were doing? Common sense was suspended, just as British folk throw decorum to the winds on their first continental holiday and do abroad things they would never contemplate at home. Most of those who latterly put

risky high-tech unquoted stocks at home, yet did so in Norway.

Europe is not an emerging market, where you pump money for long-term growth, expecting a rocky ride on the way. Continental economies are as mature as Britain's even if stock markets play a smaller, less developed role. To beat the averages spectacularly, you must take as heady risks as you would have to in Britain — and are as unlikely to succeed for long.

Unit trusts are a great way to turn steady savings into investments that will grow at least in line with earnings. Unless you are prepared to take risks and switch in and out, however, the ones to pick are not the winners whose names feature at year-end, but those that do 5 to 10 per cent better than the relevant market index year after year as a result of skilful management. There are plenty of them. Many are run by specialists whose directors' fortunes depend on long-term reputations rather than the short-term acclaim that builds funds and profits faster in a crowded market.

Investors who prefer to rely on high street or cut-glass names should expect high standards of operation and control, even if performance is as mediocre as shrinking MGE's now threatens to be. Often, cost-cutting big banks fail in this responsibility because they have axed highly paid people who added layers of quality control but brought in no cash. When big names fail investors, regulators should extract a high penalty, and exclude them from the



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BRITAIN'S LEADING INVESTMENT HOUSE

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Sara McConnell says investigations into complaints are taking up to six months

PIA admits complaints department is in chaos

Investors trying to get compensation for alleged bad advice and financial loss are facing delays of at least five months before their cases are investigated, because of administrative upheavals in the complaints system set up to protect the public.

Some people are still paying interest on loans they were persuaded to take out as part of complex financial deals that unravelled in the recession. Sue Durden, a Weekend Money reader, is still paying interest on an £18,000 remortgage taken out as part of a home equity release scheme in 1991, while waiting for the ombudsman to deal with her case.

Chris Hamer, general manager at the Personal Investment Authority ombudsman's bureau, admitted this week that investigations were taking up to six months to resolve after investors had lodged complaints and bureau case workers had received the relevant investors' files.

He blamed the delays on the merger of several different complaints-handling schemes and arguments with insurance companies about the powers of the PIA ombudsman.

The PIA ombudsman's office, which is now supposed to be handling the majority of complaints from investors about insurance companies, fund managers and independent financial advisers, has also been understaffed.

Often desperate investors have been caught in the middle of this administrative muddle. Mrs Durden and her husband Paul were advised to remortgage their home in 1990 to generate extra income for school fees. Their financial adviser, who was then a member of the Financial Intermediaries, Managers and Brokers Regulatory Association (Fimbra), persuaded them to remortgage their home for £105,000 with the Cheltenham & Gloucester, the former building society, more than doubling their existing loan of £47,000. Of the enlarged loan, £50,000 went into an Allied Dunbar investment bond managed by the financial adviser. The repayments on the mortgage were to be met by a £50,000 bank loan, while the income from the bond went towards funding the school fees and paying the bank loan.

But rising interest rates and falling stock markets in 1990 meant the cost of the extra mortgage rose, while income from the bond failed to materialise. The capital value of the bond had fallen from £50,000 to £46,526 when the Durdens encashed it in July 1991, in a bid to stem their losses. After paying off the bank loan and some of the larger mortgage with the proceeds, they were still left with an outstanding debt of £18,000.

Mrs Durden first complained to Fimbra at the start of the year after fruitless attempts to resolve the dispute with the adviser with the help of her solicitor. But Fimbra was being swept away in a regulatory reorganisation and no longer exists except to clear up loose ends. Independent financial advisers, including Mrs Durden's, are now regulated by the PIA. Complaints are dealt with by the PIA ombudsman, who is also supposed to be taking on the 90 complaints still outstanding from Fimbra - including Mrs Durden's. The PIA ombudsman officially took over the Fimbra complaints in April.

But the ombudsman did not start investigating her case



Sue Durden is still paying interest while waiting for the ombudsman to decide

until it was contacted by *The Times* this week. Mr Hamer said the bureau had temporarily lost Mrs Durden's file and has yet to follow up her initial completed complaint form. He promised that her case would be given priority, and that she would be contacted "within the week".

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not all, of the takers are elderly people with capital locked up in their homes. 1990. Recession sets in. House prices slump, interest rates rise and shares fall. Bonds fail to perform, because of poor markets and inept management by brokers. People find debts mounting as mortgage repayments rise and income from the bond to pay them is not forthcoming. Regulators ban sales of the plans.

1991. The industry-funded Investors Compensation Scheme steps in to compensate victims. 1991-96. The ICS pays out a total of £47.3 million to 2,888 investors of collapsed firms. The insurance ombudsman orders £5.5 million compensation in a further 500 cases involving insurance companies. 1995-96. The PIA ombudsman is investigating five cases.

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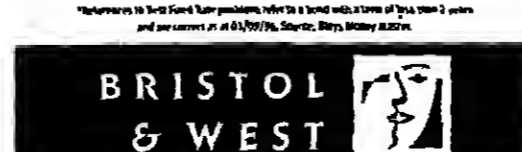
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Caroline Merrell explains why motorists will be in for a shock when their insurance renewal arrives



Moore's the merrier by buying direct

One driver who managed to reduce her insurance premiums by buying her policy through Direct Line is Gigi Moore, a 35-year-old housewife from Surrey. Ms Moore, pictured with son Jake, 2, had been buying the insurance policy on her car for several years through an insurance broker, but decided three years ago, in the interests of cost-saving, to buy her policy through Direct Line. Ms Moore, who had a no claims discount, was able to reduce the premiums she paid by a third. She now pays annual insurance premiums of £500 on her Renault.

Why insurers love 55-year-old women

If you are young, live in the inner city or have a chequered driving history, you could be in for a shock when it comes to renewing your motor insurance policy. Some of the UK's biggest motor insurers are giving warning that premiums could rise by at least 7 per cent next year — with the biggest increases falling on higher-risk drivers. Direct Line and General Accident have already increased rates, while Norwich Union, the UK's biggest motor insurer, is forecasting that premiums could rise by between 5 and 8 per cent over the next 12 months. Provident Financial, which insures 731,000 motorists, has already put up its premiums by 7 per cent this year, and expects to raise them by a further 7 per cent before the year end. The rises follow several years of static or falling motor insurance premiums as stiff competition between the motor insurers has had a big impact on prices. This decrease was the result of the success of Direct Line and Churchill, the direct insurers that deal directly with the public by telephone rather than through brokers. Norwich Union, a company which itself recently launched a direct insurance operation, points out that between 1993 and 1996 it managed to cut its premiums by 17 per cent. The forecast rate increases have been caused by the bad winter which led to an increase in the number of accidents. Norwich Union claims that more bodily injury claims over the past year, up 8 per cent, and a rise in the number of cars stolen or broken into, of about 7 per cent, has added to the pressure on rates. A spokesman for the company said: "We believe we are ahead of the market in terms of increasing premiums. There has been a gradual increase in claims over the last year and a half. The severe winter months means there have been a lot more accidents. Economic activity is on the increase, which means more people are driving around." The message for those buying motor insurance is to shop around. There is a huge differ-

ence between the most expensive and the cheapest rates on the market. They are set according to age, sex, motoring history, and area. The biggest factor affecting premiums is age. According to AA Insurance, which insures one million motorists, a 55-year-old woman driving a small to mid-range 10-year-old car is the best insurance risk. The broker's research also shows that the average premium for a 17-year-old male is around £2,005 a year, while the average premium for a 55-year-old male is about £180 a year. Premiums are not the only thing to consider when buying a motor policy: the wording of the policy is equally as important. It is very important, for example, to check the level of excess on the policy. Some policies will offer cover for windcreens, while others will only offer cover if approved repairers are used. Expensive audio equipment and mobile phones may also not be covered. Some motor insurance policies may also throw in RAC, Green Flag or AA cover. It is also important to check whether you are insured to drive other people's cars, and whether the policy depends on your having a garage.

FIRST PUBLIC OFFER
of units at 50p each closes 1.30 p.m.
Monday 30th September 1996

M&G EUROPEAN SMALLER COMPANIES FUND

The new M&G European Smaller Companies Fund will invest in smaller companies in Europe, with the sole objective of long-term capital growth. The market for European companies is undergoing rapid change. M&G have deliberately timed the launch of the new European Smaller Companies Fund to capitalise on the high potential rewards from the sector as it enters this exciting new phase. We believe the new Fund has the key ingredients for success, combining opportunity in a growth sector with M&G's proven track record of stock selection in both European and smaller company markets.

Fund objective
The fund will invest in smaller companies in Europe with the sole objective of capital growth. The manager will generally seek to draw the holdings from a universe of companies which constitute the bottom third in terms of total market capitalisation. There may be some investment in medium and larger capitalised companies which will enhance the liquidity of the Fund. Exchange rate fluctuations can affect both income and capital values. The market in securities issued by smaller companies is narrow and investors should expect wider than average price fluctuations.

4.00 p.m. The Managers have a discretion to carry out additional valuations when they consider it desirable to do so. Prices and yields will appear daily in the Financial Times. The spread represents the difference (based on the offer price) between the price at which you may buy units and the price at which you may sell units. The price of your units must rise by at least this amount before you cover your dealing costs. The spread includes 0.5% transfer stamp duty when applicable. The value of units and the income from them can go down as well as up. You may get back less than you invested.

5.00 p.m. Based on Manager's projected portfolio as at 5th August 1996 the estimated gross distribution yield was 0.88% per annum. It is anticipated that at least a substantial proportion of the distributions made on this new fund will be paid as Foreign Income Dividends (FID).

Since this will be a new unit trust it is not possible to quote either the most recent bid-offer spread, or the maximum permitted spread, but in normal circumstances the spread between the bid and offer prices is likely to be between 5.25% and 5.5% of the offer price though we retain the right to widen the spread or change the pricing basis within the permitted range. We like to base the offer price on the creation price which usually gives a bid price higher than the cancellation price. However, we may widen the spread, or change the pricing basis of units, within the range permitted by the relevant statutory regulations.

For large deals (which the Financial Services (Regulated Schemes) Regulations regard as deals in excess of £15,000) we may widen the spread within the permitted limits.

Income and Accumulation units
Income and Accumulation units will be issued. Accumulation units provide a facility for the automatic reinvestment of income without having to pay any initial charge on the reinvestment. The reinvestment is included in the price of Accumulation units. The number of Accumulation units does not change. The effect of the reinvestment shows in the relative increase in the price of Accumulation units over Income units.

You may convert Accumulation units into Income units and vice versa at any time without liability to capital gains tax. We make no charge for this service but we allot only whole numbers of units and retain a fraction of a unit arising from the conversion in the fund for the benefit of all unitholders. Income distributions, whether paid or reinvested, will be treated in an identical manner for tax purposes. We issue only whole numbers of units and will hold any balance money in a client money account and carry it forward to the next income payment date. The Fund will distribute on a half yearly basis, the first ex-dividend date being 19th May 1997 and the first payment date being 10th July 1997. The next ex-dividend and payment dates will be 24th November 1997 and 12th January 1998 respectively.

Taxation of the Fund
The Fund will pay corporation tax at 20%. It is expected that the Fund will pay all or at least a substantial proportion of the distributions as foreign income dividends (FID). Distributing this income as a FID, as opposed to an ordinary distribution, saves tax, resulting in a higher net distribution for you. Authorised unit trusts are exempt from capital gains tax on dealings within the Fund. Income tax: Dividend distributions carry a tax credit, currently 20%. If you are liable to tax on your lower rate income, you will have no further tax to pay. Higher rate taxpayers will have a further liability to tax, if you are not able to pay tax, you can use the tax voucher to support a tax repayment claim. FID distributions will not carry a tax credit, although they will be treated as having been taxed at 20%. The only difference for you from a normal dividend distribution is that you will not be able to claim a tax repayment if you are not liable to tax. Capital gains tax: When you sell units you may, depending on your personal circumstances, be liable to pay capital gains tax on the increase in value of the units. For 1996/97 an individual's first £25,000 of gains on disposals in any tax year is to be tax free. Gains in excess of £25,000 will be added to your other income and taxed accordingly. There is additional relief as the cost of buying the units is increased to allow for inflation. Managers' reports: Every six months, on the applicable payment dates, you will be sent a half yearly or annual accounting report on the progress of your fund, the Managers' Report. At the end of each year you will receive an Income Distribution, if you hold Income units, and a tax voucher. Your tax voucher will confirm on a six-monthly basis your holding as at the relevant ex-distribution date. If no distribution is payable, we send a confirmation of your holding with the Managers' Report. Other: An initial charge of 5% is included in the offered price which is the maximum authorised by the Trust Deed. The Managers' annual charge of 1.25% based on the fund's mid-market value is deducted from gross income fortnightly on a pro-rata basis. Trustees fees (which are subject to VAT) are based on a scale reflecting the size of the Fund, namely: on the first £50 million, 0.0150% and £50 million to £100 million, 0.0125%. Registered fees are 0.08% plus VAT. The annual custodian charge as at 10th September 1996 would have represented less than 0.1%. Trustees and auditors: The Trustees is Lloyds Bank PLC. The Trust Deed may be inspected at the Head Office of the Trustee or at M&G's office at 3 Houndsditch Court, Great Tower Street, London EC3R 7XH. The auditors are Coopers & Lybrand. Further information: The Fund is a wider-range investment and is authorised under the Financial Services Act 1986. In certain circumstances you are entitled to cancel your contract to purchase units and have the sum you invested returned to you. Cancellation rights arise under the Financial Services (Cancellation) Rules 1989 and only apply if you invest through an independent financial adviser on his/her personal recommendation and your customer agreement with them does not exclude cancellation rights. When you invest a lump sum you will not get a full refund of the money you have paid if the offer price of the investment falls before we know that you have served the cancellation notice. This is because we deduct an amount equal to such fall in the offer price from the refund you would otherwise receive. Cautionary notes: The value and the tax benefits of PEPs will depend on your own circumstances. The tax regime of PEPs could change in the future. You should always remember that the value of units and this income from them may go down as well as up and that you may not get back the amount you invested. Holdings in overseas investments are subject to exchange rate fluctuations which can affect both income and capital value. M&G does not offer investment advice or make any recommendations about investments. We only promote the packaged products and services of The M&G Marketing Group. M&G unit trusts are managed by M&G Securities Limited (regulated by IMRO and The Personal Investment Authority) and The M&G PEP is managed by M&G Financial Services Limited (regulated by The Personal Investment Authority). Any queries? If you have any queries concerning any aspect of the M&G unit trust range please get in touch with your usual independent financial adviser (if you have one) or M&G's Customer Services Department, M&G House, Victoria Road, Chelmsford CM1 1FB. Telephone: (01245) 303090 (9 a.m. to 6.00 p.m. Monday to Friday).

APPLICATION FORM

To: M&G Securities Limited, M&G House, Victoria Road, Chelmsford CM1 1FB.

1. Please use this form if you wish to invest in the fund outside The M&G PEP.

2. If you wish to invest in the fund via The M&G PEP Plan Tick this box and complete section 3 only and we will send you a personal application form. Alternatively, telephone 0900 800 620 for details.

3. Personal Details: Please complete the full form in which units are to be registered (minimum age 14 years, but see note 1 below if you wish to buy units for children under 14 years of age).

First Holder: Title: Mr/Ms/Miss/Ms/Other; Full Forename; Surname; Address; Postcode; Telephone No. (inc. STD code); Daytime; Evening (optional); NLAUTO

Second Holder: Title: Mr/Ms/Miss/Ms/Other; Full Forename; Surname; Address; Postcode; Telephone No. (inc. STD code); Daytime; Evening (optional).

4. Investment Details: Please complete below the amount you wish to invest. You will also need to show which unit type you require.

Full name of fund chosen	Amount to be invested (min £1,000)	Unit type required* (indicate as appropriate)	Payment method
M&G European Smaller Companies Fund	£ 00	Income/Accumulation	Please make your cheque payable to "M&G Securities Limited". If you wish to receive income distributions, please indicate "I" in this box <input type="checkbox"/>

* If no unit type is selected, we will issue accumulation units. *Please note that the income payments received from this fund will be negligible.

5. Declaration: We apply to make the above investment specified above. (Joint applicants should both sign).

Signature 1: _____ Date: _____ Signature 2: _____ Date: _____

M&G

THE NEW M&G EUROPEAN SMALLER COMPANIES FUND

More take care of health headache by going private

Until this decade, private healthcare was a luxury enjoyed only by a privileged elite. Seven million people are now covered by private health insurance (12 per cent of the population) and some experts forecast that, by the year 2000, this figure will have risen to 16 per cent. Perhaps the most significant aspect of this rise is the number of people who are actually buying private cover for themselves, rather than enjoying it as a perk of their employment. There is a growing realisation, particularly among the young, that universal healthcare may no longer be available when they reach old age. With an ageing population — there are at present more than nine million people aged 65 or over in the United Kingdom — and with the numbers of younger people supporting the National Health Service through the tax system dropping substantially, it is perhaps inevitable that individuals, certainly the affluent, will in future have to take far more responsibility for funding their own healthcare costs. Central to all this is the current political debate on the future of universal welfare and health in the UK. All political parties, in spite of the pre-election rhetoric, realise that in the long term, difficult choices will have to be made if any sort of universal system is to be sustained. And this new thinking has been welcomed by the private health profession. David Bryant, managing director of Bupa, when asked whether he thought the election of a Labour government would be bad news for the private medical industry, responded: "Not at all. Tony Blair is a pragmatist who is not about to wage an ideological war against us. I think both political parties are coming to realise that eventually people will have to contribute towards their own health costs." In his book *The Blair Revolution*, Peter Mandelson, the Labour leader's aide, talks of the National Health Service as being an essential safety net, thus suggesting that there is a valid role for private medical cover as a top-up to the service provided by the State.

DAVID GODLEY

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while Helen Pridham begins a new series on health insurance



A survey found many policyholders thought they would be covered for the sort of ailments Dr Ross cures in ER, but this is not always the case

An alternative but not an NHS substitute

Companies providing insurance to cover the cost of private medical treatment are hoping that growing public concern about the National Health Service will lead to increasing sales of their policies. Yet they admit that the service they provide is no substitute for the NHS.

This is not always evident from the companies' marketing campaigns, which emphasise the breadth of their services and the "peace of mind" they provide. However, PPP Healthcare, which began an intensive advertising campaign nearly a year ago, has had to withdraw some words from its advertising after a ruling against it by the Advertising Standards Authority.

Complainants objected to the words "... with you at every step... all the help you need if you're ill" which implied the company would assist in every circumstance when in fact there were exclusion clauses in the policy advertised. The ASA agreed that the claims exaggerated the scope of the plan and asked them to be removed.

No private insurer will pay for the whole range of treatment you can receive from the NHS. All companies limited their help to acute, ie, curable, conditions. Chronic ongoing conditions are not covered. John Dubois, PPP spokesman, said: "Basically insurers will pay for treatment designed to make you well again. If a condition does not respond to treatment and care is merely maintaining the status quo, this will not be covered."

Chronic conditions range from ailments such as hay fever or asthma to multiple sclerosis or kidney failure requiring regular dialysis. If you develop such a condition, your private insurer will normally cover costs for specialists and tests up until such time as the diagnosis is given. "We would then inform the policyholder that we can no longer cover the costs, giving adequate warning so other arrangements can be made," said David Ashdown of WPA. According to insurers, people are well aware of this and other limitations to the

cover they provide, though the Office of Fair Trading (OFT), in its recent report into the health insurance industry, found evidence that indicated a significant level of misunderstanding.

For example, it referred to a survey carried out by the Hospital Management Trust in late 1995 which showed that a large proportion of patients believed policies covered a range of costs that they rarely do. These included: the fees of private GPs, 36 per cent; the cost of drugs at home, 43 per cent; the treatment of chronic conditions, 28 per cent; and psychiatric consultations, 33 per cent. It is always important to examine the list of exclusions. Most policies do not cover treatment for normal pregnancy and childbirth, in-

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No private insurer will pay for the whole range of NHS treatments

fertility and sterilisation, dental and optical care, HIV and Aids, drug or alcohol abuse, cosmetic surgery, appliances, outpatient drugs and dressings and transplants.

One area where the greatest misunderstanding can arise is in relation to pre-existing conditions. These are permanently excluded under most policies which ask for details of past medical history.

But some companies operate a moratoria approach whereby such ailments may be covered if they do not recur within two years of taking out a policy, and no treatment, medication or advice has been received for that condition or any related condition during that period. However, the OFT came down against the moratoria approach and advised it should be abandoned. The scope for misleading sales claims with these policies was a big area of concern. Policyholders may believe they are purchasing more extensive cover than is actually the case. John Bridgeman, Director-General of the OFT, said: "For consumers it the moratoria approach involves a number

of actual or potential drawbacks. Exclusions may well not come to light until a claim is made." He feared it may even be bad for consumers' health. "They are given a clear incentive not to seek medical advice during the moratorium period." The leading provider of moratoria policies is Prime Health, part of Standard Life, and the fourth largest insurer in the sector. Richard Roche, marketing director, defends the approach, saying it can allow customers to gain cover for pre-existing conditions that may be permanently excluded under other policies.

He said: "We spell out to potential policyholders very clearly what the implications of the approach are and in the last 18 months we have had only six complaints has specif-

HEALTH INSURANCE

ly what you are not covered for from day one. Misunderstandings can still arise for instance if application forms are not sufficiently detailed and prospective policyholders may fail to mention some past accident or illness for which they may not even have sought medical advice, only to find a claim rejected on the ground of non-disclosure. However, not all insurers that underwrite their policies exclude all pre-existing conditions out of hand. PPP and Clinicare, for example, will consider providing cover for certain conditions for a higher premium. OHRA, the Dutch insurer, sometimes imposes temporary exclusions of one or two years only until the nature of a particular problem, such as a knee injury, is clear.

The extent of the treatments covered is not the only area which prospective policyholders should be clear about before they sign up for a private medical insurance policy. Other vital features which need to be compared include limits on benefits, such as cash ceilings or exclusion of certain outpatient treatments. However, the complexity of the presentation of policies often makes such comparisons difficult.

Next week's article will highlight what to look for when buying a new policy.

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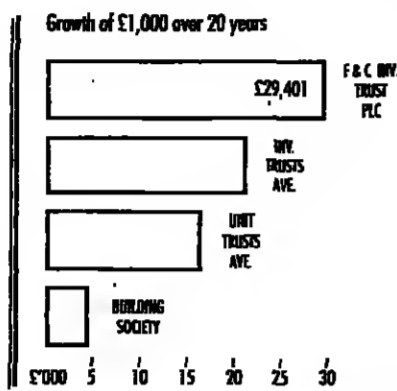
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High penalties for the Co-op's instant access

Sarah Jones thinks some new products are in danger of bending the definition

The new instant-access account from the Co-operative Bank is the equivalent of making a quick cup of coffee not with Gold Blend granules but with coffee beans and a percolator. You are allowed immediate access to your money — but at the hefty price of 30 days' loss of interest.

Save Direct, launched on Monday, is part of the Co-op's telephone banking service. Interest rates are tiered, including 5 per cent gross on the minimum £1,000 balance, 5.5 per cent on £5,000 and 5.87 per cent on £10,000.

Customers can arrange withdrawals by telephoning to request a cheque or a direct transfer to another account, but all withdrawals are subject to 30 days' loss of interest. Furthermore if you ask for a cheque you will be charged £5. And minimum withdrawals, at £250, are high for an instant-access account.

While the interest rates may be good for an instant-access account — though Alliance & Leicester's Instant Direct comes close on most of the tiers and beats the Co-op on balances of more than £50,000 — a fairer comparison would be with a 30-day notice account.

It does well on balances of £1,000 but above that there is plenty of competition. The Cheltenham & Gloucester Direct30 pays less on balances under £10,000 but does better on the larger balances. Chelsea's new 20-day postal account pays 6.05 per cent on £5,000 compared with the Co-op's 5.5 per cent.

On all tiers above £5,000 Northern Rock's Great Northern Postal offers higher rates. Ironically Northern Rock also calls this an instant-access account but again withdrawals are subject to 30 days' loss of interest. The society says it can only offer high rates of interest because of the withdrawal penalties.



Co-op's instant-access takes a lot longer than making a coffee

"It does fit within the definition of instant-access," said Bill Eyres of the Co-operative Bank. "It is instant in that you can phone up and immediately transfer money, and you only lose interest on the amount of money you move."

"The Co-op calls this a long-term savings account and it should be seen as such, given the loss of interest," commented Christine Bayliss, investment editor of MoneyFacts.

Obsolete accounts become obsolete

At last some good news for savers. Slowly but surely building societies are getting rid of that dead duck, the obsolete account. Even where societies retain an obsolete account, which is closed to new investors, they accept that savers have to be paid a better rate of interest.

This week the Portman building society announced that it is scrapping the paltry interest rates on its Closed Issue accounts. Instant-access accounts will now earn 4.5 per cent gross, while monthly interest accounts will earn between 2.75 per cent and 5.25 per cent, against less than 2 per cent in some of the old accounts. The terms and conditions, account numbers and passbooks of the old accounts remain the same — it is simply the rate of interest that has changed.

"Past mergers mean that the society has taken on accounts that are not added to the product range so become obsolete," said Mike Dobson, the Portman's corporate affairs manager. "We have written to savers before suggesting they move

accounts, but we see this as a tidying up exercise."

The Bradford & Bingley has also been rationalising its accounts. In July it transferred the balances of more than half a million customers into new accounts paying better rates of interest. The Halifax too is getting rid of obsolete accounts. By the end of this month all two million of them should have been transferred into a Liquid Gold account. The society says that means savers will be getting at least the same rate of interest or a better rate than in their old account.

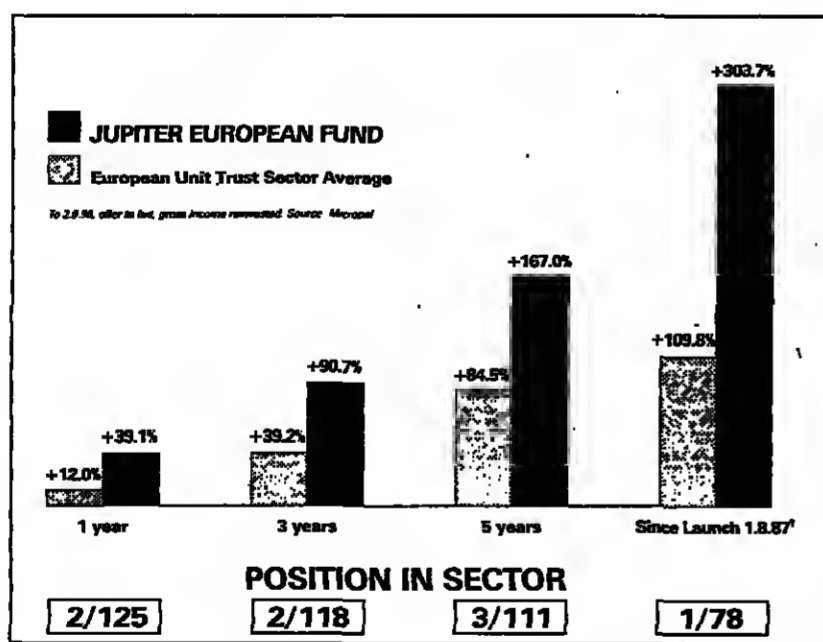
same rate on the equivalent accounts. The main problem for savers in obsolete accounts is that they normally cannot add to the balance and so if they want to invest more they will have to open a new account. Societies will normally let you transfer to the equivalent open account without penalty.

While societies might write to savers or scatter interest rate leaflets around branches, the onus is definitely on the customer to check the status of their account and whether the rate of interest can be bettered. Take a look at your account if you are with the Alliance & Leicester, Bristol & West or Woolwich.

If you want to transfer from an obsolete account, first make sure that the equivalent tier on the new account is paying more than your old one. Above all, in these days of mergers and conversions, check that you will retain your membership status, by moving into a share, not a deposit account, and by closing the old and opening the new one simultaneously.

SARAH JONES

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Back to school again

Karen Zagor gives suggestions of the different methods of saving up to finance school fee accounts



A year at boarding school now costs £10,700 on average, while a day school place is £4,500

As the nation's school children pack their book bags and slip into their blazers for the first days of the new term, parents with children in independent schools may well be wondering whether they will be able to afford another year of fees.

For parents planning for the year ahead, the only certainty is that fees will continue to rise. They have increased annually for ten years and there is every indication that this trend will continue. In addition, school fees tend to rise faster than inflation: this year they are up 5 per cent, considerably higher than the underlying inflation rate of about 2.6 per cent. A year at boarding school now costs about £10,700, on average, while the average cost of a day school place is about £4,500.

Given the cost, financial planners advise parents to start saving as soon as possible. Mark Bolland of Chamberlain de Broe, the financial adviser, said: "There will be some people who can afford to pay the fees out of income, but most people will want to pay from a mixture of income and capital so you need to build up the capital as quickly as possible. Even if you have a very high income now, there may be things that affect it in the future, so it is important that the whole term of the child's education is covered."

Which investments are best?

The answer will depend on your circumstances. There are, however, some constants for anyone planning to save for school fees. The first is safety. This is not a time when you want to put all your money into a venture capital or emerging markets fund. While the potential returns

may seem promising, there is the danger that you will lose the money earmarked for your child's education.

Advisers suggest steering clear of special, school-fee investments. Jonathan Gumble of Brooks MacDonald Gayer, the adviser, said: "At the end of the day you want the best investment. Parents should be wary of some of the schools fees products. A number of insurance salesmen have taken a look at some insurance products that have not sold well and put a "schools fees" label on them. Parents think that because it has the right label it is the right thing for them when it isn't."

Before deciding where to invest, parents need to consider how long they have before they will need access to the funds, and whether they want to make an occasional, large lump sum investment or use a monthly savings scheme.

"School fees by their nature are long-winded affairs. You are trying to build a portfolio of investment which, when the time comes, will give you scope and flexibility. For most people, saving up enough from investment income is unrealistic," said Mr Bolland.

Peps

Peps are basically unit or investment trusts with a Pep wrapper which allows any gains or income from the fund to be free from tax. Each parent can invest up to £9,000 a year in a Pep. Most Peps come in both lump sum and regular savings form, so parents can choose which method they prefer. Monthly savings tend to even out the impact of market instability. Peps have the advantage of great flexibility. Funds can be taken out when needed, and savings can

be halted or interrupted if your circumstances change.

Peps are most suitable for parents who have five years or more to save because equity markets tend to rise over the long term, but there is a danger in short-term equity investments. Parents who already hold Peps that they plan to use for school fees should consider shifting their money from the Pep to the building society before the school bill arrives. Otherwise they could find that a bad week on the stock market has taken a big bite from the money they had intended for school fees.

Investment and unit trusts

Most financial advisers see these as the best form of long-term savings. They are best started when the children are young, so there is enough time for the gains to offset the risks of the equity market. Investments can be made with lump sums or regular monthly savings of about £50 a month.

Zero dividend preference shares

These offer a greater degree of security than most equity investments, although they are not as safe as a National Savings or guaranteed product. They are generally regarded as low to medium risk. They pay out a fixed amount on a fixed date, so parents know exactly what they are

going to get at a particular point in time. They can also be staggered, so that they mature over a number of years when school fees are due. Returns are usually in the region of 7.5 per cent. Income from zeros is classified as capital gains. Since most people do not use up their annual capital gains tax allowance, income should be tax free. You can only buy zeros with a lump sum, so these will not suit parents looking for a regular savings scheme.

Tessas

Tessas, like Peps, have tax advantages. In the case of Tessas, interest is paid tax free provided the plan runs for the full five-year term. Fixed-rate Tessas allow parents to know exactly how much they will get when the fund matures, which is useful for those with enough time to plan ahead.

National Savings

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With-profits endowments

These have come under heavy attack for hefty charges and disappointing returns, but Mr Bolland believes some of the returns can be excellent if the commission charges can be taken off. The schemes are also very secure, and they can be tax efficient. One disadvantage is that they need to be held for a long time, ten years is about the shortest term available. Mr Gumble believes there is little to recommend these plans, "but the penalties for taking the money early will stop you from robbing your children's piggy bank to buy a new home."

Educational trusts

Until recently, these were endowed with charitable status, so income could be paid out free of tax. Offered by financial advisers or insurance companies, they were a popular way for parents and grandparents to put aside a lump sum for education. Recent changes from the Inland Revenue mean that from April the trusts will lose their charitable status, so income will be taxable, making these trusts far less attractive.

Other options

Parents should use every option available. If your child is gifted, scholarships are listed in *Choosing Your Independent School* and *The Independent Schools Yearbook*. Also check with the individual school for details. If your child sings like an angel, they may be eligible for a choral scholarship. The Choir Schools' Association in Deangate, York, lists the appropriate schools. Music scholarships can be found in *Music Awards at Independent Schools*. Also check to see if your child is eligible for a bursary. These have more to do with pedigree than performance: children with a parent in the Armed Forces, for example, may be eligible depending on the school.

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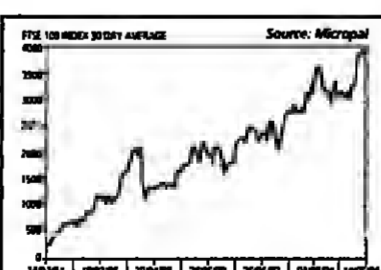
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BILL SANDERSON

continued from page 31. col 6 remove any shares which have a suspect valuation. Morgan Grenfell said that all the problem stocks had been removed but would not specify which of the obscure Scandinavian stocks had been defined as a problem.

The Investment Management Regulatory Organisation, the principle regulator for Morgan Grenfell Asset Management, says the investigation could take several months. It has already resulted in the suspension of Stewart Armer, manager of the Europa fund, for suspected breaches of personal account dealing rules.

The investigation is likely to cover the roles played by those in a position to know of Mr Young's investment decisions. These include:

■ **MGAM's** compliance department, headed by Mike Whedley, which had to sign off investments.

■ **Glyn Owen**, MGAM's chief investment officer for Europe.

■ **MGAM executives**, who were alerted to three breaches of an investment rule in May.

■ **The trustees**, General Accident and latterly Royal Bank of Scotland, which by law should have warned Imro about any rule breaches. General Accident qualified the Europa Growth fund's annual report this year as a result of the SIB rule 5.14 breaches.

Judy Delaforte, a spokeswoman for Imro, says: "We are still gathering information. We still don't know if there was negligence on someone's part; if a third party is concerned, or someone within the firm, or if Morgan Grenfell's compliance officers are at fault. All these are questions that we will find answers for later."

Imro's own role is also likely to come under the spotlight. The regulator requires investment companies to submit quarterly returns and annual statements on their funds. It also conducts on-site inspections of companies and their fund managers, which range from 10 months to 30 months in frequency. The regulator refuses to comment on when it last visited Morgan Grenfell.

Ms Delaforte says: "More frequent contact is required if the public has direct contact with the company, as in the case of a fund manager. If we thought the firm had run into problems and needed hand-holding, contact would be monthly, weekly, or even daily."

Remedial action by Morgan Grenfell and Imro has done little to stem investors' worries. When trading resumed on Thursday, private investors sold holdings worth £114 million. Morgan Grenfell anticipates that redemptions will be about 15 per cent over the next few weeks, higher than normal for this time of year.

Many investors have been angered at the lack of information provided by Morgan Grenfell. The company's first official communication went out on Wednesday.

Amanda Davidson, of independent financial adviser Holden Meehan, is particularly concerned to know how Morgan Grenfell will calculate the true price of units bought during the past year. She says: "We have several clients invested in these funds, including some buying units on a monthly basis who have probably paid too much."

The affair is also expected to have a knock-on effect on other investment companies. M&G, which intends to launch a new European smaller companies unit trust next week, has received hundreds of calls from worried investors who had confused the two companies.

Rachel Medill, a spokeswoman for M&G, says: "We could be happier. It is absolutely the right time to be investing in Europe, but we are not expecting to attract hundreds of millions of pounds in the first month — more like £50 million."

Thomas Allraun, fund manager of the new unit trust, says: "I don't have any plans to hold unlisted stock. If I ever do, I will want an undertaking that the company will be listed within 18 months. We are not venture capitalists." The Securities and Investments Board says it will be reviewing the rules on unit trusts' ownership of unlisted stock.

The question of compensation for investors in the three Morgan Grenfell funds has to be resolved. Although in its letter to investors the group seemed to be making a pledge of compensation, its other statements on the subject were contradictory.

On Tuesday the fund manager pledged to "meet all liabilities in respect of any irregularities identified in the course of the investigation into these funds". But on Thursday Graham Kane, managing director of Morgan Grenfell Investment Management, attributed the funds' sharp falls to poor performing quoted stocks. Stuart Mitchell, who is now managing the funds, blamed the erosion on profit-taking in the technology sector, where the funds have significant holdings.

In the past six months, the value of the funds fell 14 per cent, compared with a flat trend for European trusts overall. Many now believe that the funds were abnormally volatile because they held nearly 26 per cent in unquoted stocks. The investigation into the Morgan Grenfell funds has centred on the unquoted part of their portfolios.

Calls for compensation may come from investors who believed that they had put their money into successful funds with a limited exposure to unquoted stocks, only to discover on Tuesday morning that they had holdings in an entirely different, high-risk vehicle. In a damage limitation exercise, Morgan Grenfell spent the week trying to per-

suade financial advisers that the crisis was under control. Until recently Morgan Grenfell's European funds were the top performing trusts in the sector. Many advisers sold personal equity plans based on the trusts, as a way of allowing clients to diversify their Pep portfolios away from the UK market, which appeared to be peaking at the beginning of the year.

Morgan Grenfell also announced that Stuart Mitchell would take the helm at its European Growth Trust and European Capital Growth funds, replacing Peter Young, whose unconventional investments in unlisted companies led to the current crisis. Mr Mitchell joined the company in 1987 as a management trainee. Most recently, he has managed specialist European portfolios for UK pension funds. Keith Percy will be fund director. Julian Johnston will replace Stewart Armer as head of Morgan Grenfell's Europa fund. Mr Armer was suspended this week over unrelated matters.

Financial advisers appear to have accepted Morgan Grenfell's arguments that the new management team will be able to restore the funds' performance. But privately, many fear that more evidence of mismanagement might emerge at the fund management operation. Best Investment, with £20 million of clients' money in the funds, was advising clients to wait and see.

CAROLINE MERRELL AND KAREN ZAGOR



Countdown to the suspension of Peter Young

1992 — Peter Young joins Morgan Grenfell from Mercury Asset Management.
 May 1994 — Mr Young takes over management of the Europa Growth unit trust.
 April 1996 — Mr Young's managers first raise concerns at the spiralling level of unquoted securities held in the portfolios of his two funds, Europa Growth and European Capital Growth. He is instructed to reduce the proportion of unlisted securities, but given until the end of the year to do so because the stocks in question are hard to sell.
 Mid-April 1996 — The FBI launches an unrelated investigation the affairs of Solv-Ex of New Mexico, which extracts oil from sand.
 June — The Securities and Exchange Commission, the US market watchdog, alerts its UK counterpart, the Securities and Futures Authority (SFA), that it is looking into the role played by Fiba Nordic, an SFA member, which

arranged a \$70 million private placing of Solv-Ex shares. SFA widens the inquiry after reports about transactions in Solv-Ex shares.
 Early July — The SFA comes across two new names: Ice Securities, also an SFA member, and Mr Young, Ice Securities and Fiba Nordic provided independent valuations to Morgan Grenfell on the unquoted stocks.
 July 15 — SFA notifies the Investment Management Regulatory Organisation (Imro), Morgan Grenfell's watchdog, of links between SFA members and Mr Young, who is also personally authorised by Imro.
 July — General Accident, Morgan Grenfell's trustee, raise the issue that the trust holds more than 10 per cent of a number of unlisted companies and is, therefore, breaching City unit trust rules.
 August 27 — Imro begins monitoring Mr Young.

August 29 — Mr Young is formally interviewed after Imro raids Morgan Grenfell's London offices.
 August 31 — Investigators dig up the first evidence of irregularities in three funds, Europa Growth, Europa and European Capital Growth.
 September 1 — Morgan Grenfell decides to suspend the three European funds the next day.
 September 2 — Mr Young is suspended after a further Imro interview. Morgan Grenfell announces dealing has been stopped because of "the discovery of possible irregularities centred on certain unquoted securities held by the three funds".
 September 3 — Morgan Grenfell admits that up to a third of the £788 million European Growth fund was invested in unlisted securities in May. The Serious Fraud Office is notified by Imro about the Morgan Grenfell case and

maintains a watching brief pending compilation of a case file. Morgan Grenfell and Royal Bank of Scotland, which succeeded General Accident as trustee or custodian of two of the funds, obtain High Court writs freezing the assets of Mr Young and Russ Oil & Technology, a Luxembourg company with which Mr Young is believed to be closely associated.
 September 4 — Deutsche Bank, Morgan Grenfell's parent company, takes unquoted securities from the three funds on to its own books at a cost of up to £200 million. Stewart Armer, fund manager of Morgan Grenfell's Europa fund is also suspended on an unrelated matter concerning suspected breaches of personal account dealing rules by using an outside broker instead of an in-house one as the rules stipulate.
 September 5 — Dealing in the three funds resumes.

Advertisement

One call saves Larry £152 on home insurance

SENIOR ANALYST Programmer Larry Rozmaryn and his wife, Ros, love the theatre. But these days, the cost of the best seats is pricey — and the couple, both 42, from Barnet, Herts, and with two daughters, Hayley, 14 and Leanne, 10, and the family's cat Mitch, to care for, an evening out at a show followed by dinner is a rare luxury.

Nevertheless, when they celebrate their 17th wedding anniversary in September, the couple are planning to splash out and have booked seats for the new hit musical *Martin Guerre* — and it's all thanks to Prudential.

When the buildings and contents insurance on their end-of-terrace four bedroom house in Barnet, Herts came up for renewal recently, Ros decided to follow up on a number of advertising leaflets to see if they could

lower the cost of protecting their home. "We were paying £644.73p for our combined old policies and that seemed very expensive." By choosing to pay monthly, Larry and Ros were paying interest on top of the basic premium, taking the total cost of their annual premium to £709.20.

They wanted to pay less, yet achieve the same fully comprehensive, all risks, New-for-Old cover with legal protection and additional personal protection that their old policies afforded them. "We wanted a policy with a reliable, well-known company and one that would provide all the fine details", Larry explains.

And achieving that wasn't easy. "Ros rang Prudential and we were both delighted when they quoted us £557.17 for identical cover — a saving of over

£152. What's more there were no interest charges for making monthly rather than an annual payment." That is more than 20 per cent less than they were paying for their previous policies.

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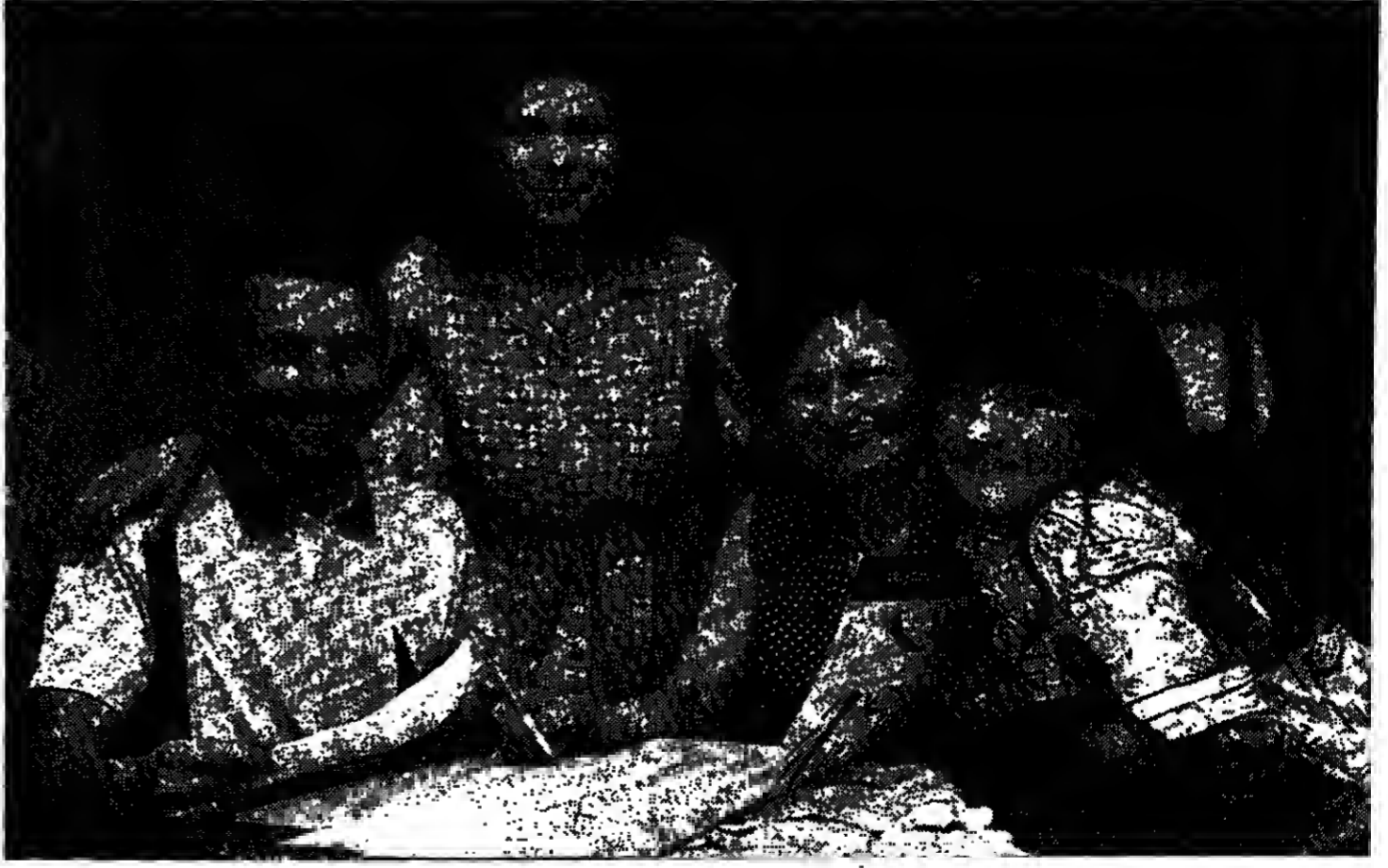
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The cost of your home insurance premium depends on a number of factors including where you live. That's because some areas are more risky than others. To get a rough idea of how much a Prudential New-for-Old home insurance policy might cost you, consult the table below.

Premiums shown are for buildings and contents cover for a person aged 30 owning a three bedroom semi-detached house built in 1955.

Aberdeen AB1	£158.31	£13.19
Bournemouth BH9	£185.99	£15.50
Bradford BD24	£167.59	£13.97
Bristol BS27	£178.86	£14.91
Stevenage SG3	£205.15	£17.10

The figures are correct as of August 16 1996. Please note that they include the 15 per cent discount for combined buildings and contents insurance plus a £15 introductory discount off the buildings premium. Insurance Premium Tax of 2.5 per cent is included.



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WEEKEND

THE TIMES SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 7 1996



My dear Humphrey

I have done my best to die before this book is published. It now seems possible that I may not succeed. Since you know that I am not enthusiastic about it you are generous to give me space for a postscript.

One of my predecessors at Canterbury on being shown his portrait and asked whether he thought it did him justice, replied "It's not Justice I need, but Mercy".

There is much that is just and more that is merciful in your story but I am afraid that they do not add up to my original idea for a biography. It is certainly not a hagiographical "stocking filler" but it is yet another personal investigation

A LETTER FROM ROBERT RUNCIE

heavily dependent on the skilfully edited tape recorder. Bumbling into it for background, I find it reproduced for substance. It is not only the syntax which makes me wince. There is much that I never imagined I would see in print.

The "mischievous journalist" has plenty of material for a Sunday paper profile and enticing sentences to be chopped up for promotion; but the writer of *The Inklings* who brilliantly evoked the atmosphere of Oxford in the 40s does not seem to me to have fully grasped what it was like to be Archbishop of Canterbury in the 80s. Maybe some distancing is essential if all

the evidence is to be gathered in. I can imagine an historian in the distant future, fascinated by your words, saying "But surely there was more to it than that". Meanwhile I shall try to keep my sense of humour and the perspective of eternity. I am sorry that you have had such difficulty in "pinning me down". Indeed I have a strong suspicion that the whole experience has made you the Reluctant Biographer of

Yours truly

The reluctant Archbishop

Today *The Times* begins an exclusive serialisation of the controversial new biography of Robert Runcie, the former Archbishop of Canterbury. Here, Valerie Grove interviews its author, Humphrey Carpenter



To Robert Runcie, Humphrey Carpenter seemed the ideal biographer. Carpenter's father was Bishop of Oxford in the 1960s when Runcie became Principal of Cuddesdon theological college. Young Humphrey would attend Runcie's services twice each Sunday, and when the students performed end-of-term revues, gazing Runcie's Muggers-like tones, Humphrey played the piano. The first Carpenter biography, of *The Inklings* (C.S. Lewis and his circle), drew a fan letter from Runcie. So he was not at all surprised to be Runcie's choice for his official biographer in 1991.

The two settled down with a tape recorder at Jennings Road, St Albans, the Archbishop's home in his retirement. Carpenter decided to write the book in the form of a diary — "Wednesday, went to St Albans. Runcie opened the door in shirtsleeves... the Boswell approach".

Mrs Runcie said "I bet you can't print most of it" but they never asked for a right of veto. "If he had asked for it, I would have said yes," Carpenter says. "But he didn't." Neither asked to see the work in progress. Runcie seemed relaxed about it. "He could hardly have been less concerned about putting himself in a good light."

"He's very flirtatious, with both sexes," Carpenter says. "He has a way of making people feel good, talks very intimately and responds closely to whoever he's with. He loves gadding about to Jeffrey Archer's parties, John Birt's parties, Glyndebourne, Ascot. There's never been such a sociable archbishop since the Middle Ages. He is after all a boy from a pretty drab, suburban lower-middle class home on Merseyside, who got where he was by a mixture of intellectual ability and luck."

Runcie was candid about various girlfriends he had, even when he was intending to be a celibate priest. "There was a German girl he took up with when he was in the Scots Guards. And a long friendship with romantic overtones with Jenny Boyd-Carpenter — she was an ex-model with split skirts, and he can still name her perfume — who bought him his first pig. Pig-keeping is one of the things the press seized on about him."

"When he met Lindy [his wife Rosalind] she was the Trinity Hall bursar's daughter; he says she has a very 'bursarial' attitude to money. She's an outspoken and vigorous person and as you remember, when the tabloids made allegations about her behaviour, she successfully sued."

It was Rosalind Runcie who read Carpenter's finished text first, and professed herself horrified. "She felt I'd betrayed confidences, put in things that were never meant to go on paper. But there was no dishonesty on my part: he always knew the tape was running."

Runcie first wanted to suppress the book. "He asked me to treat it as an archive. I said that wasn't possible and he realised he wasn't in a strong position. And when they'd got over the first shock, they went through the text carefully,

several times. I sat for hours with him — it was all done in the usual English civilised fashion — and cut the things he really wanted taken out. So he has, in a sense, approved and censored the text. But he is still left feeling fundamentally uncomfortable about the whole thing."

What upset Runcie most? "Well, I was rather horrified to discover that he didn't write the first drafts of most of his sermons and public speeches. People expect churchmen to write their own sermons, as my father did, and Runcie's predecessors did. The first draft of the famous Falklands sermon [People are mourning on both sides of this conflict — at which Margaret Thatcher was said to be livid] was largely the work of Richard Chartres, now Bishop of London, echoing a *Times* article by Richard Harries, the Bishop of Oxford."

"Runcie would enlist the help of almost any friend — Gerald Priestland, Garry Bennett, or Peter Cornwell, who became a Roman Catholic priest — then rephrase, and almost learn by heart. He said it was because he lacked the time but actually he lacked the confidence to make initial statements himself."

And as Runcie's letter (above) says, the syntax of Carpenter's verbatim recordings made him wince. They lacked the carefully constructed precision of his formal utterances: "He would have liked the chance to polish up his prose."

Carpenter wears the air of a harassed schoolmaster. "Purple shirt, no tie, shabby green trousers, untidy grey hair, long nose," as I heard him describing himself. He is 50, married to Oxford's senior education officer, has two daughters, writes children's books as well as biographies, is co-director of this year's Cheltenham Festival of Literature and plays in a band. When we met he had spent all day in the BBC archives. I found him absorbed in Dennis Potter scripts. His biography of Potter comes next — after his forthcoming history of Radio 3, *The Envy of the World*, and, of course, Runcie. He remains affectionate towards his rumbunctious priest, and convinced that his portrait is fair. "He is fundamentally conservative about almost everything in policy terms, but at the same time a total liberal. His conservative side may be horrified by this book, but his liberal side will enjoy it. It gives a true picture of his view of the Church of England and its internal fights, not just the big ones over public issues but the little backstairs assassinations, how people get on in the system and are chosen as bishops. And he never asked me to cut his views on the Royal Family, which were fascinating."

"I think the result allows him to reveal himself with candour as an amusing, complex, self-contradictory man. When the dust has settled he may find people treat him with new interest and respect and he'll enjoy a new lease of life — he's 75 and on rollicking form — because he's a man who does love being in the public eye."



PAGE 2: THE CROCKFORD'S SCANDAL AND GAY CLERGY

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INSIDE STORY

In December 1987 Robert Runcie faced public outcry when an 'anonymous' critic took his own life

The Crockford's attack that ended in death

On November 25, 1986, the Rev Gareth Bennett of New College, Oxford, wrote in his diary: "A letter from Derek Pattinson [Secretary-General of the General Synod] asks me if I would write the anonymous preface to the next Crockford's. He wants it by the end of May. I do not think that I can face the work."

On the same day, Bennett heard that Richard Harries was to be the next Bishop of Oxford. He remarked in the diary: "I suppose I had thought they might ask me."

Crockford's Clerical Directory, the Church of England Who's Who, by tradition carries an unsigned preface which comments, sometimes acidly, on current ecclesiastical events. In many ways, Bennett was the ideal contributor. As much an Oxford don as a clergyman, he was a conservative High Church man who, disappointed in his ambitions, could be expected to take issue with trends within the Church. But he was also a shy man, a celibate who was uneasy in company, particularly that of women.

From 1980, Bennett was one of Runcie's regular speechwriters. Runcie says that he had asked for Bennett's help occasionally before he became Archbishop: "From time to time, if there was anything historical to be written, I would ask his opinion and Garry would write me a draft. I remember he was rather a master of quotations from Sydney Smith. He was a great help to me."

Bennett took pleasure in hearing his own words from Runcie's mouth. His Oxford friend, John Cowan, recalls watching one of the royal weddings on television with Bennett, who proudly identified part of Runcie's sermon as his own work. Other ghost writers were happy to help Runcie and expected nothing in return. For Bennett, however, the working relationship raised his hopes that his career might take a favourable turn. Bennett's 1985 diary shows Runcie seeming to take a great interest in his career.

January 3, 1985: "At the sherry before lunch I had a talk with Bob Runcie. He said that he wants us to have lunch later in the month and a serious talk."

Runcie says that Bennett constantly fouled his chances of advancement through ill-judged behaviour. "I began to promote him as a person to be taken seriously. I put him up for several jobs. I tried to get him a canonry at Canterbury. But I remember John Baker [Bishop of Salisbury] saying, 'Anyone who's ever sat on a committee with Garry Bennett will run a mile at the thought of promoting him.'"

Graham Leonard [then Bishop of London] was well aware of Bennett's ambitions. And his dependence on Runcie for fulfilling them: "A number of us used to say to him, 'Look, if you want to move anywhere, you've got to give up writing Bob's speeches and sermons. Because otherwise he won't let you go; he relies on you too much.' But Garry wouldn't do this."

Another year passed, and Bennett's hopes were still being disappointed. January 1, 1986: "... I had half expected to be offered some kind of senior church job but again nothing happened. A whole series of possible deaneries and bishoprics went by and often were filled with second-raters. Of course, during this year I have become closer to the Archbishop and clearly he owes me something and needs me in the present situation of the Church."

Several letters from Runcie indicate the extent to which he now depended on Bennett for material. "I don't know

whether you would like to have a shot at something to help me, or to talk some time by phone or face to face. You are the only person to date who in my present naked state had produced a brief which I could actually use!"

Runcie admits that he had little wish for personal contact with Bennett: "He was a menace on the telephone... He would go on and on... I realise in retrospect how he must have craved this sort of conversational exchange."

Another undated letter from Runcie shows that he was still fuelling Bennett's hopes of a deanery or bishopric: "I only wish that I could do more for you. Rest assured that I will not cease from promoting the cause."

At the end of 1986, Bennett realised the futility of his position and on February 20, 1987, wrote in his diary: "The ineffable Richard Harries [the new Bishop of Oxford] filled the religious slot [on Radio 4] with honeyed vacuity. What do I do? The prospect of staying on in the C of E as I am, a fish-out-of-water in a church dominated by the liberal establishment, is not inviting."

noted: "I stayed in trying to work on Crockford's, which is beginning to be a worry."

The preface was finished on July 9, well after Pattinson's original deadline. "I shall have to brace myself for its publication next December. It could cause an explosion! And I shall certainly be suspected! But now I do not care!"

The first section contained nothing controversial; it was a shrewd summary by an accomplished church historian of the predicament of the Anglican Communion. Then the preface turned to the head of the Church.

"Robert Runcie has been Archbishop of Canterbury since 1980 and has already established himself as a notable holder of the primacy. He has intelligence, personal warmth and a formidable capacity for hard work."

There were other compliments, then:

"It would therefore be good to be assured that he actually knew what he was doing and had a clear basis for his policies other than taking the line of

seen it — and it was already in circulation." When he read it: "I think I spotted it was Garry at once". But he was not particularly disturbed by the preface. Attacks on his style of archbishopric had become commonplace, and: "I thought, 'Garry's said these sort of things to me before. I didn't take it all so seriously.'"

The press officer was quicker off the mark. On the day before publication, Bennett received "a series of telephone calls from various newspapers asking if I were the author of the Crockford's preface. They concentrate on it entirely as an attack on the Archbishop, ignoring all the rest of it. I simply denied that I was the author! What was the alternative?"

Thursday, December 3: "A very restless and sleepless night, consumed with anxiety and regrets over this wretched article. Up at seven and to the shop to buy up the papers. A great spread in The Times with a full page of quotations. The general view was that the Archbishop has been 'savaged'. I suppose I was naïf not to anticipate this furore!"

On the morning of publication, the Tory papers were inclined to agree with the preface-writer in their estimate of Runcie and continued to give the story prominence the next morning. Bennett, who had spent "another wretched night", recorded: "A reporter from the Mail rang up to offer me £5,000 if I was the author and wished to go public with them. He said it was rumoured that an announcement was to be made in the next 48 hours." Bennett's diary ends here.

By Monday evening, there began to be some concern in New College at Bennett's non-appearance — he was to have been conducting entrance examinations for history candidates — and John Cowan decided to call at his house. "I knocked on the door and got no response." Cowan summoned Bennett's next-door neighbour, who had a door key because he was often asked to feed the cat.

"We opened the front door... As we went in we saw first of all [Bennett's] suitcase on the stairway. Then we saw the cat was dead in the sitting room... I looked into the garage. It was not very light, the lights are not very good in the garage, it was half-light. I looked into the car. We saw Dr Bennett stretched out in the passenger seat. I realised that he was dead."

Next morning, Tuesday, December 8, The Sun led with the banner headline "Runcie row author kills himself". That day, there was due to be a meeting of the policy subcommittee of the General Synod (of which Bennett had been a member). The meeting was held in private; at its conclusion, a coolly-worded statement was issued expressing "grief" at Bennett's death and deploring the "various pressures to which Dr Bennett had evidently been subjected following the preface's publication."

Runcie, who was present, recalls the meeting: "Everybody was waiting for this statement, and one nice member of the committee said: 'Oughtn't we to couple it with a statement of our loyalty to and affection for the Archbishop?' And one by one by one these characters said: 'I don't think so, that's another matter. If we were to say we supported the Archbishop, that would suggest that there was a question of people not supporting him.' I suppose I felt a bit hurt. I thought, 'I've devoted hours to these piddling meetings, and they're not prepared to put up some line statement of support.'"



The press saw the Crockford's preface as an attack on the Archbishop

ing. I am now excluded from any real place in his leadership, only in its opposition."

It was in this state of mind that he accepted Derek Pattinson's invitation to write the anonymous preface to the 1987 Crockford's. Pattinson does not give the impression that his choice was motivated by malice towards Runcie.

Asked if he knew that Bennett was going to be critical of Runcie, he says: "I knew from general conversation with him, then and on other occasions, that his view of Robert was very affectionate and very critical, both at the same time." In fact, Bennett's emotions about Runcie were being affected by events since he had accepted the commission. On February 1, 1987, he went to Bushey Heath in Hertfordshire to preach for his vicar, George Austin [now Archdeacon of York]. After lunch, according to Bennett's diary, Austin produced "an interesting computer read-out which showed how virtually every episcopal or deanery appointment was Bob R's nepotism. It shook me, and I began to see I had really no chance." The print-out, which is among Bennett's papers, seemed to him to demonstrate that liberal churchmen had generally been preferred to Anglo-Catholics and evangelicals.

Bennett found the Crockford's preface very hard to write. On March 27, he

least resistance on each issue... He has the disadvantage of the intelligent pragmatist: the desire to put off all questions until someone else makes a decision. One recalls a lapidary phrase of Mr Frank Field that the Archbishop is usually to be found nothing his colours to the fence."

The preface turned to other targets. The General Synod was "virtually powerless and consistently ineffective", most of the debates were merely for show. Power was with the diocesan bishops. This had led to a "virtual exclusion of Anglo-Catholics from Episcopal office and a serious under-representation of Evangelicals."

Here, the attack on Runcie resumed: "One thing cannot be doubted: the personal connection of so many appointed with the Archbishop of Canterbury himself... Though one may accept that an archbishop should have influence on appointments, it is clearly unacceptable that so many are the protégés of one man and reflect his own ecclesiastical outlook."

The preface concluded by hoping that the Church of England could be rescued from "its present suburban captivity" and become "once again a Church for the English people."

Runcie recalls that he first heard of the preface from Eve Keatley, the Lambeth press officer: "She said, 'I'm very worried about this.' I said I hadn't

Runcie was trained for ordination at Westcott House, a place designed for gentlemen amateurs rather than serious theologians, though it had consistently produced more bishops than any other Anglican seminary. Its style was set by the principal, Kenneth Carey, who was snobbish but stimulating company.

What about the obviously homosexual atmosphere? "I wasn't conscious of it. I was amazingly innocent about the gay world, amazingly ignorant. I remember Richard Hare saying that Ken must be constantly torn by his physical reactions to handsome young men, and it had never occurred to me. But I had no time for the sloppy emotionalism of Westcott. I made common cause with a group that was in opposition to it, led by somebody who became my suffragan bishop when I was at St Albans. Vic Whitsey, who was from Lancashire, and was prepared to start putting the knife in. There was a termly news bulletin, the Record, and Vic wrote in it: 'Do you belong to Athens or Jerusalem?' — a protest against the homosexual atmosphere.

Was this his first encounter with the element of homosexuality in the Church of England? "It was really, but I don't think there was any physical expression of it, no going to bed together. I think not, though I can't say for certain. "Ken was quite proud of me, because I was somebody who had 'had a good war' and, though I say it myself, I belonged to a group of rather promising characters who had academic honours. But I was never really close to Ken. I was

Facing the dilemma of gay clergy

Anglo-Catholic, very amusing in conversation, and the best of the three lecturers... He hadn't had his breakdown yet."

When it came, what caused it? "His relationship with his family, and his homosexuality, and his rage at the way he hadn't been able to express himself. All this is charted in his autobiography, which has created great scandal because he's so open about his homosexuality."

The book is called *Some Day I'll Find You*. It was published in 1982 with the author's name as "H.A. Williams, CR" — the initials stand for Community of Resurrection at Mirfield, of which Williams is nowadays a member. Williams trained at Cuddesdon and became a curate at All Saints, Margaret Street. He describes himself at this stage of his life as "God's blue-eyed boy or — perhaps a better description — his lady companion... This God of mine forbade me to be three-quarters of what I was... The elimination of sex was one of the most important clauses in the contract I had made with him... Even mildly attractive people God regarded as his sexual rivals... And since sex and emotion are so closely bound up together, there were whole realms of feeling which were also frozen. God wanted me to be an emotional dwarf so that I might give my stunted heart wholly to him. And I used to tell him that my heart was stunted because I didn't love him as much as he deserved. How,

'I've always been conscious that the homosexuals might stab me in the back because I wasn't one of them'

When he recovered, he chose a sexually liberated way of life: "During the next years I steps with several men, in each case fairly regularly. They were all of them friends. Cynics, of course, will smile, but I have seldom felt more like thanking God than when thus having sex." He continued to officiate as a priest, was the Dean of Chapel at Trinity, and became a monk at Mirfield when he was in his fifties.

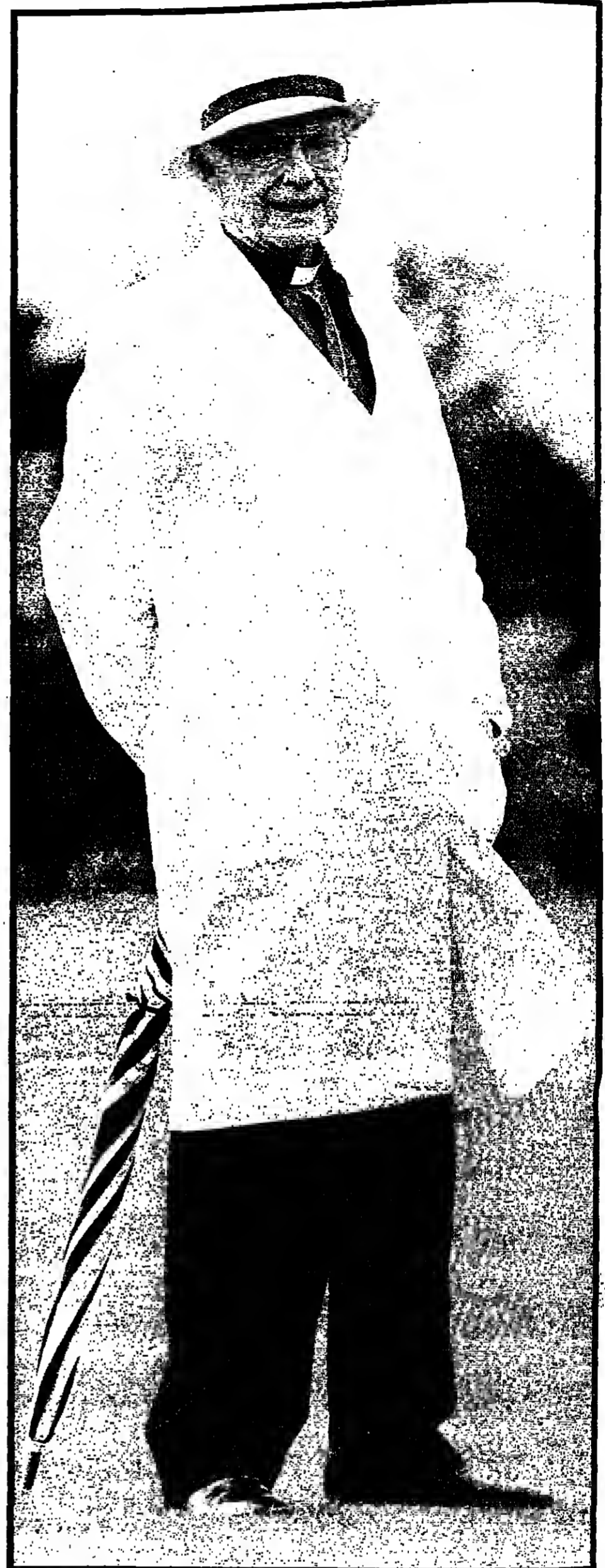
Talking to Runcie about the sexual atmosphere at Westcott, I mentioned that several of his friends had told me that he intended to become a celibate

thought of getting married in those days, and believed that I would be content to be unmarried, though I preferred female to male company. No, that's too extreme in the second regard, because I was chubbable and enjoyed male company... There was a crude economic element in it: I never had any spare money to marry the sort of girl who I found good company. Does that make sense?"

Carpenter: "Yes, up to a point. You'd had lots of girlfriends and yet you really could imagine yourself leading a celibate life?"

Runcie: "I know that it sounds odd, and I think that it was perhaps something that never got resolved. And it was only when I got married that I realised how foolish I had been, how enjoyable it was. And yet I would still say today that I'm three-quarters bachelor, really. Because there's a great deal of retiring into books, and retiring into the male club — whether the church or the academic male club or the military male club — because I'm so at home and protected there."

Carpenter: "People have sometimes interpreted you as having, if not a homosexual private life, then a sort of..." Runcie: "Yes, I know." Carpenter: "And the Spitting Image version of you is immensely appropriate." Runcie: "Yes."



Bennett claimed Runcie "puts off all questions until someone else makes a decision"

homosexual clergy. I think mind you, that it is exaggerated now, because of the availability of the London clergy to grab the headlines. I honestly don't think that in good old-fashioned dioceses like Newcastle it is a huge problem. But yes, I'm not comfortable at ordaining somebody whom I know to be a practising homosexual, and I tried to hold that line. I reckon now it's a difficult line to hold."

I raised the point with Eric James, a priest Runcie had known since Cambridge days, that many people assumed that Runcie was gay. "The word 'gay' is so complicated," James answered. "If you said 'Robert is gay', you'd be cutting out a large part of him." Not that he means that Runcie is a practising homosexual; merely that many elements can be found in his sexual psychology.

Edited extracts from Robert Runcie: The Reluctant Archbishop, by Humphrey Carpenter, published next month by Hodder and Stoughton, £20

IN THE TIMES ON MONDAY

The Archbishop provides a close-up view of Britain's troubled Royal Family

Don't despair about the weather, let's celebrate the arrival of autumn because it brings six months of good eating and hot food

Goodbye salads, hello puddings

I carefully scanned last Sunday's newspapers but spotted no reference. I even scoured Monday's, thinking it might have been held over a day, but no. Were we not blessed with being out of the reach of cable television. I would have checked that new all-food station to see if they, of all people, had realised the significance of the day. I bet they didn't. The sad fact which has to be faced is that we have arrived, at long last, at a month with an 'r' in it, and yet nobody seems prepared to make the effort to throw a hat in the air, dance down the street and shout it from the rooftops.

But I shall. Now that it is behind us, I can reveal my true feelings about summer cooking. I loathe it. For me, there is nothing more depressing than the appearance of the first spring asparagus, for from then onwards it is a steady dive into tepid summer eating, terminating in a depressing pool of chilled soup somewhere around the August Bank Holiday.

It is not even good for us either, with most summer food needing dollops of dressing and mayonnaise to kid us that

what we are eating would not taste far better if it were hot.

But now it is all over. It is at last September, and we have six months of good eating ahead of us before the green asparagus spears point grimly to another season of chilled fodder. Throw more coal on the fire, get out the pudding steamer, rub the rust from the chestnut roaster. And throw a blanket over that barbecue, lest it gives us nightmares.

In the age of cook-chill and airfreight, not many contemporary cookbooks celebrate the seasons, but my 1937 edition of Elizabeth Hallen's *Hostess Cookbook* can hardly contain itself. "September is an important month in the calendar of the epicure. It is the month of oysters and partridges, pork and hares, while vegetables and fruit are in abundance." She goes on to remind us that a "little smart frock for the evening... is one of the little etceteras that go to make or mar a

holiday". Those of us who are less used to Ms Hallen's starched and well-hemmed school of catering might find themselves more at home with a slim volume, also from 1937, called *The National Mark Calendar of Cooking*.

The National Mark, it tells us, was "a government trade mark, a safeguard of quality" - a kind of prototype Chartermark. Maybe John Major has a copy - but some of its boasts ring a little hollow these days.

"The housewife can be sure of her beef being what the butcher says it is, because it was graded by an expert from the Ministry of Agriculture." Ahh... um.

The booklet is divided into months and, like me, the men from the ministry

HOME MADE



Paul Heiney

cannot resist the urge that rises in them once September arrives. "Chickens are much larger, almost monster now; and with Michaelmas Day, the goose comes into his prime... long evenings propel us towards dessert... hunger and less difficult to please, the mere man relapses into his autumnal habits and the housewife knows that her task will be less exacting for the next six months."

So I tried one of these September recipes. It was the carrot pudding to which I was propelled. Do not rumple your little black frock by hunting for the required half pound of National Mark carrots: the scheme, unaccountably, did not last. You will also

need two eggs, 4oz of butter, 2oz of castor sugar, fresh breadcrumbs and a teaspoon of cinnamon.

Wash the carrots, boil until tender and whizz until they are a mush. (Sorry, but time was too short to resort to the sieve.) Cream the butter and the sugar and add the yolks of the egg, the carrot puree, about six slices of white bread made into crumbs and a hefty teaspoon of cinnamon. Mix well together.

Take the whites of the two eggs, whisk until they are stiff and stir them very lightly into the mixture. Problem. My mixture was so dense that there was never any possibility that it would part in any direction to allow the entry of any egg white. So I stirred it all in a hasty way, cursing the Ministry of Agriculture and deciding that this recipe proved once and for all that they never were to be trusted.

You are supposed to steam this mixture for two hours, but I did not feel like wasting the fuel, this being 1937 and a war due any minute. Instead, I slung the whole lot in a moderate oven for half an hour, expecting the bin to be its next port of call.

No one was more surprised at the outcome than me. Not only was I propelled towards one helping, but quickly to a second. Despite its uncooked density, it turns out surprisingly light: halfway between a sponge and a suet pudding. Just right for the season, really: we are past the days of airy mousses but not yet ready for the heavy stodge that keeps out the cold.

I am now only sorry that I did not make the government-recommended lemon sauce to go with it. "Boil the rind of a lemon in water for five minutes, add an ounce of sugar, an ounce of butter, the juice of the lemon and the eggs beaten up. Stir very carefully in a double saucepan until the sauce thickens, strain and serve." I am sure it works. You can trust Mr Chamberlain.

Welcome, autumn.

CHOCOLATE BOX

THIS Easter, Selfridges sold two tons of Lindt mini-eggs (£3 for 226g/8oz, Easter only) in as many weeks. This Christmas its confectionery hall will sell about 200kg (500lb) of its own champagne truffles (£4.75 for 226g/8oz). In other words, one or two of its customers enjoy chocolate - which is why, six years ago, the London department store started Chocoholics, a week-long chocolate festival.

This year, 14 chocolate makers or suppliers will be handing out samples or demonstrating culinary tricks with chocolate from September 19 to 28, and about 3,000 people will slaver their way to this chocolate shrine.

Correction. According to Selfridges's chocolate buyer, customers do not slaver. They are more interested in the science and theory of their favourite food than troughing through samples.

Some chocoholics use Chocoholics as a forum to launch new products. Montgomery Moore (01463 722053), for instance, will reveal its white chocolate sauce (£4.95 for 195ml/8oz). This is not for purists who believe there is no such thing as white chocolate.

However, Sheila Torrance, who started the company five years ago, had so many customers asking for high-quality white chocolate that she devised this brandy butter lookalike. Made from pure cocoa butter, cream and whisky, it keeps for three weeks in the fridge once opened - unless it is in my fridge, that is.

THE company will also be offering fruits smothered in chocolate. Dried mango slices dipped in dark chocolate (£5.99 for 150g/5.3oz) and orange peel, similarly dipped (£5.99 for 150g/5.3oz), are popular and so are apricots dipped in white chocolate (£4.25 for 140g/5oz).

House of Dorchester (01305 264257) will be offering its relatively new mint crunch truffle (£2.99 for 65g/2.3oz) and Belgian chocolate maker Godiva (0171-495 2845) will be demonstrating chocolate dipping as will the English chocolate house Ackermans (0171-624 2742).

JANE OWEN

Entry tickets (£6) can be bought on the day at the entrance to the third-floor exhibition centre, Selfridges, Oxford Street, London W1 (0171-629 1234).



Hot stuff: babyfood containing spices has proved a surprise hit. "If you give babies bland food, then they have trouble eating fennel when they are six," says Belinda Mitchell of the Original Fresh Babyfood Company

Born to be wild

ANYONE WHO has been through the Earth Mother stage that invariably accompanies the arrival of a first born will remember the earnest chopping, sieving and pureeing that went on to ensure that Precious was weaned on real food. The intention was laudable but tended to result (in my case at least) in all food being reduced to a khaki sludge.

But at last you can guiltlessly abandon these unrewarding tasks because the Original Fresh Babyfood Company has come up with some fresh baby foods. The range - which should be available in Asda, Safeway and Waitrose by the end of the month - includes such gastronomic delights as rice with courgette and a little banana, baked fish with fennel, and potato, mushroom and sweet pepper risotto, all made without fillers, colours or additives. Recommended prices are from 99p to £1.29 for a pot.

What is interesting is that

many of the recipes contain spices such as coriander, cumin and cinnamon as well as very grown-up flavours such as fennel. Belinda Mitchell, who runs the company with her husband Keith, and who tested the recipes on her children and their friends, says that distinct flavours go down well with babies. "If you give babies bland food," she says reprovingly, "then they have trouble eating fennel when they are six."

Lizzie Vann, the founder of Baby Organix, an organic babyfood company, agrees. Organix has had a surprise hit with a vegetable and coconut korma - one of the products in its vegetarian range - which contains coriander, cumin, turmeric and ginger. And for those of you who don't want the Earth Mother function taken away entirely, Organix now has a range of dried pastas and matching jars of sauces. You can find Organix products in Boots and most large supermarkets.

Oyster offers

SEPTEMBER sees the start of the native oyster season and much singing and dancing across the nation's fish restaurants and oyster bars. Randall

and Aubin in Brewer Street, London W1 (0171-287 4447), is offering a glass of champagne and six oysters for £7.50 to theatregoers (or any other oyster-lovers) who turn up between 6pm-7pm. If you can manage to make it to Sheeky's in St Martin's Court, London

DIGEST



Fiona Beckett

WC1 (0171-240 2565) need Thursday, when it celebrates its centenary, you can buy oysters for just 10p each.

If you thought fresh oysters were available all year round these days, they are - but they're the farmed Pacific or rock oysters, which are distinguished by their large, craggy-looking shells. Unlike natives (which are smaller and flatter) they don't breed in the cool

waters off the British coast so never have an off-season.

Oyster aficionados maintain that the native variety is superior in flavour, but this year they are also likely to be twice the price.

Personally, I find rock oysters will do nicely. Some of the best I've had are from Ireland. Cuan Sea Fisheries of Killinichy in Co Down (01238 541461) will send any amount you want by overnight carrier. A delivery of two dozen, for example, would cost £23, post and packing included.

Tuscany taster

IF YOU ARE plunged into gloom at the thought that summer is nearly over, there's still time to book a last-minute break with Tasting Italy (0181-964 5839), which has a few places left on its Tuscan cookery holidays from September 16-23 and 23-29, and October 7-13. For Times readers it is knocking £200 off the £985 cost of the week, which includes all tuition, meals and wine but not flights, which start at about £160.

Unlike some cookery holidays where you can just loaf around watching someone else do the work, Tasting Italy holidays are hands on. You

should come back - several pounds heavier - having mastered the art of making gnoccoli, risotto, pasta, pizza and various kinds of Italian bread. You can tell your bank manager I led you on.

Hobnobbing

IT'S A TOUGH old life in the world of advertising, thinking of riveting things to say about your client's often mind-numbingly dull product, so a significant anniversary comes as a godsend.

Recently, I have learnt that this year marks the tenth anniversary of Hobnobs, the 50th anniversary of scampi and the hundredth anniversary of chop suey.

The accompanying press releases tend to be full of the type of spurious facts that are useful only to people who have to organise quiz evenings.

Did you know, for example, that in 1995 the UK biscuit market was worth £1.649 million? Or that we consume more than 34,000 tons of scampi a year - equivalent to the weight of 4,285 double-decker buses? Or that chop suey is not Chinese at all but was knocked up on the spur of the moment by a chef in San Francisco for a couple of

sailors who came in for a late night meal?

What they don't tend to answer is the question: how does anyone know? The invention of Hobnobs is within fairly recent memory but where did scampi suddenly spring from? Did someone discover it in a basket under a gooseberry bush?

According to Young's, which admittedly has a vested interest in being the hero of this particular story, the dish stems from postwar London food shortages.

In 1946, an Italian chef at Manetta's, a restaurant in the West End, couldn't get hold of lobster and asked Young's, then restaurant suppliers, to find an alternative. After a long search, they came up with another member of the lobster family (*Nephrops norvegicus*) which chef Augusti deep-fried and named after a dish from his native Italy, scampolo.

So now you know.

More food and drink in the Magazine

Tune in, turn on, eat lots

RETRO-CHIC SUPPER

Serves six
Avocado pears with prawn cocktail
Duck à l'orange, onion rings and potato croquettes
Peach melba

These 1970s dinner-party staples, deemed unfashionable by some, are genuinely delicious. Deck out in flares, sky-blue eye shadow and lapels down to Australia, put some funky vibes on the hi-fi and get down to a Saturday night supper. Serve vodka and orange beforehand, this time with good-quality orange juice and slices of lime.

Make melba sauce
Whizz up 500g (1lb 2oz) raspberries in a food processor.

Make prawn cocktail
You can use shop-bought prawn cocktail or quickly make your own. Mix 6tbs mayonnaise with 3tsp tomato

FAST FOOD

Make duck à l'orange
Take the skin off six duck breasts. Brown the meat in a little oil in a large casserole dish over a high heat. Meanwhile, cut two bulbs of fennel into small chunks and six spring onions into 5cm lengths. Mix the duck with

425ml (¾ pint) of good orange juice, 1tbs soy sauce, the fennel and spring onions. Turn down the heat to medium and cook for seven to ten minutes, turning the meat over once or twice until it is cooked but still pinkish and the sauce has reduced down to a slightly

sticky consistency. Season with salt and pepper. Put a lid on the dish.

Serve drinks
Mix vodka with orange juice. Add ice and slices of lime. Pre-heat oven to 220C/425F/Gas mark 7.

Serve avocados
Cut six avocados in half and remove stones. Put on plates and fill with prawn cocktail. Garnish with lemon slices.

Before you sit down to eat, put the onion rings and croquettes in the oven for 10-15 minutes (or according to packet instructions).

Serve duck
Heat up duck and sauce. Serve with the onion rings and potato croquettes.

Serve peach melba
Cut six peaches in half and remove stones. Put two peach halves on each plate. Put a small scoop of vanilla ice-

Shopping List

Fruit and vegetables
500g (1lb 2oz) raspberries
2 bulbs fennel
6 spring onions
1 lemon
1 lime
6 avocados
450g (1lb) frozen onion rings
670g (1½lb) frozen potato croquettes
6 peaches

a few shakes of Worcestershire sauce
1tbs soy sauce

Meat and fish
300g (11oz) cooked prawns
6 duck breasts

Dairy
500ml vanilla ice-cream

Drink
1.2 litres (2 pints) good



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A blooming win within these walls

The green-fingered inmates who turn prison drabness into a blaze of colour

Gardening can be therapeutic, but there are few places where this is so relevant as in a prison, where flowerbeds and hanging baskets often provide the only respite from harsh surroundings.

It was this benefit which gave birth to one of the British summer's lesser known gardening competitions, the Windlesham Trophy, the winner of which was announced last Wednesday.

The trophy is named after its founder, Lord Windlesham, a former chairman of the Parole Board whose job introduced him to all aspects of prison life, and gardening as one of the rare bright spots. His suggestion in 1984 to the Royal Horticultural Society to hold an annual competition was taken up and now about 100 institutions are judged by the prison service to produce four finalists from different regions and evaluated by three RHS-trained judges.

The winner this year, after many years as a finalist and three as a runner-up, is Kirkham in Lancashire, an open prison on a former aerodrome. The jail has long had a reputation for its gardening and agriculture skills, but few people passing by would be aware of the acres of glasshouses, 50 poly tunnels, a propagating house, 120 acres of farmland growing brassicas and probably the largest crop of outdoor courgettes in the north of England.

Alf Jennings, the prison governor, says that about 60 of his 190 male inmates are engaged in gardening and agriculture as their primary work. As well as the food growing areas there are about 50 acres of amenity gardens, and it is these that won the trophy.

To make an impact with such a large area, bold groups of plants are necessary, as well as a selection of large beds and borders filled with banks of geraniums, antirrh-



**H M PRISON
KIRKHAM**

nums and other bedding annuals cut into areas of lawn. The garden's impact is well illustrated by 55 yards of sweet peas trained along a fence that greets visitors at the entrance.

Other features include a garden created around a large pond, which is an area with seats and benches for quiet relaxation, a bowling green and hanging baskets overflowing with brightly coloured flowers adorning the high walls. But it was the overall presentation, tidiness and innovative new areas of planting from previous years that impressed the judges.

As significant as the Windlesham success is Kirkham town's achievement in winning the small town section of the "Britain in Bloom" competition. A large number of the plants used by the town were grown at the prison.

Among the four finalists for the Windlesham Trophy was Holloway Prison in north London, the largest women's prison in Europe. Holloway, perhaps more than any other of the finalists, illustrates the importance of the competition as a positive influence on prison life. At a time when its publicity has included incidents such as a prison inspection team walking out in protest at the conditions, leading to the appointment of a new governor, and reports of an inmate being handcuffed during childbirth, the Windlesham Trophy success is welcome news.



An inmate at Kirkham Prison, Lancashire, tends one of the garden's trophy-winning features



One of the displays that helped Holloway become a trophy finalist

a prison established during the 1830s, and retaining the massive original gatehouse that perpetuates the frightening Victorian ethic of correction. Holloway has neither the space nor the liberty of an open prison. Its plants all come from other prison sources: annuals from Spring Hill in Buckinghamshire and shrubs from Ford open prison in Sussex. As at Kirkham, and most prisons which take gardening seriously, much of the impetus comes from the enthusiasm of the staff in

charge of the working team. But it is a telling insight into the rewards of gardening that of the 12 or so inmates who tend the gardens at any one time, most are remand prisoners who do not have to work during the day but who garden because it is enjoyable.

The centrepiece of the gardens is where the paths of the main exercise area wind across banked grass and between beds, some filled with symmetrical patterns of petunias and senecio around a central

red canna, others with cordons, cordylines and antirrhinums, or asters and dahlias beneath standard roses.

But there are other corners of rare delight and imagination: pink perovskia and "Queen Elizabeth" roses with tubs of annuals standing on a pattern of square slabs and gravel around an old garden roller; the library garden, where the towering London plane must be the largest tree in any prison garden, and where the planting includes blue agapanthus and a combination of white *Jasminum officinale* and mauve *Clematis* "The President" climbing up a stone pillar; and the courtyard education garden, designed and decorated in Japanese style, with a pond and raised brick beds planted with a variety of foliage shapes such as hostas, bamboo, latisia and skimmia. And few prison gardens can boast a rarity such as the shrub *Pittosporum tobira* that stands against one wall.

GEORGE PLUMPTRE

WEEKEND TIPS

- The widest choice of tulips is in garden centres now. Buy now, but plant only time up to December. Most other bulbs are better planted straight away. Specialist bulb catalogues are also available now.
- Evergreen shrubs can be transplanted this month. Soak the roots 48 hours in advance and move on a dull, still day.
- Prune out flowered stems on loganberries, and tie the new ones into place for next year. Space evenly on a fence or wall.
- Take cuttings of plants in terraced pots too large to bring indoors for the winter, such as *Argemone*, *Poligonum*. Use a gritty compost with little feed in it. Begin to reduce water to those pots which will come indoors.

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PROPERTY

6

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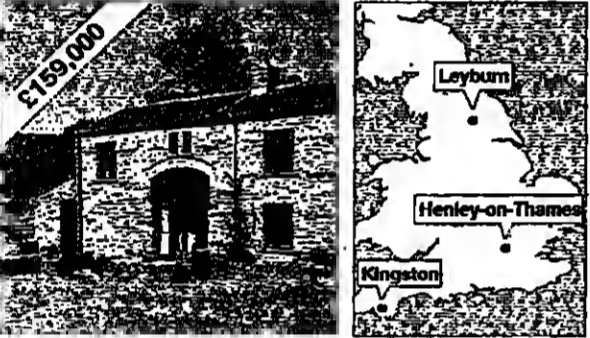
ABOUT £180,000



DEVON
Hillside Cottage, Kingston, Nr. Kingsbridge. 17th-century thatched cottage with a rear garden on the outskirts of a pretty South Hams village. Four bedrooms, attic room, bathroom, shower-room, sitting room, dining room, kitchen, utility and playroom. Offers over £200,000 (Fulford, 01548 853747).



OXFORDSHIRE
End Lodge, Christmas Common, Henley-on-Thames. Grade II listed period cottage with garden in a sought-after village location. Two bedrooms, bathroom, drawing room/dining room and kitchen. About £185,000 (Savills, 01491 579900).



NORTH YORKSHIRE
Westfield House, Marsell, Askrigg, Leyburn. Converted stone-built barn in 1.64 acres of garden and paddocks, in a secluded hamlet with views over the dales. Four bedrooms, bathroom, sitting room, dining room, kitchen. About £199,000 (GA Town and Country, 01968 623451).

CHERYL TAYLOR

How about the home office?

Rachel Kelly reports on how redundant office blocks in London are back in business as smart city flats

Office blocks in London are rapidly becoming a new source of homes. At least 200 office buildings in central London could be converted into 6,000 to 8,000 flats, according to a report by Geoff Marsh and Malcolm Beckett from London Residential Research.

The report notes a decline in the need for offices: "All the signs are that conventional white collar employment in central London is set for long-term decline, after 50 years of sustained growth."

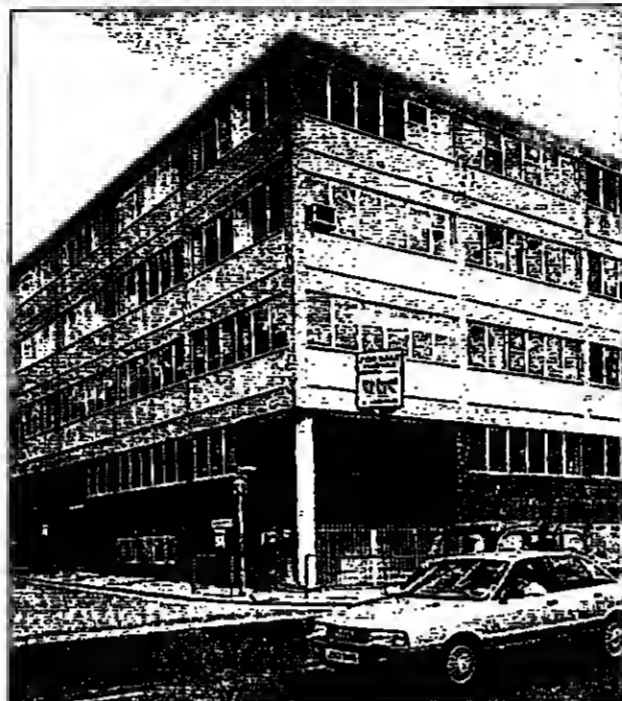
Just as the need for offices is shrinking, so the desire to live in town is growing. "The middle classes appear to be moving back from the suburbs and beyond. The collapse of the office market in the early 1990s has created the opportunity for residential developers to provide central London homes at prices which avoid living in a nondescript suburb or commuter town."

Demand is up thanks to London's growing role as a world city. Government figures show a need for more than 153,000 homes to be built by the year 2006 and its attraction as a cultural city centre brings in many potential buyers alienated by suburban apathy.

Mr Marsh says: "London is becoming an increasingly attractive place to live. People are moving back, attracted by the city lifestyle and innovative new housing schemes like loft developments."

"Converting offices into homes is a prime growth area in the property market," says Ian Marris of Knight Frank. "This is evident in the gentrification of Clerkenwell, Holborn, Southwark, and Spitalfields."

Some developers minimise conversion work by reclaiming properties that were designed for residential use. London and Henley is developing several buildings in Bayswater which were formerly used as offices. Because they were built as houses, the



Royal Tower Lodge, a 1960s concrete office block near Tower Bridge, left, before Barratt converted it into 40 one and two-bedroom flats, right

near Tower Bridge. The building had lain empty for years until Barratt redeveloped it as 40 one and two-bedroom flats. All 40, priced from £82,000 to £140,000, sold in months before the work was completed.

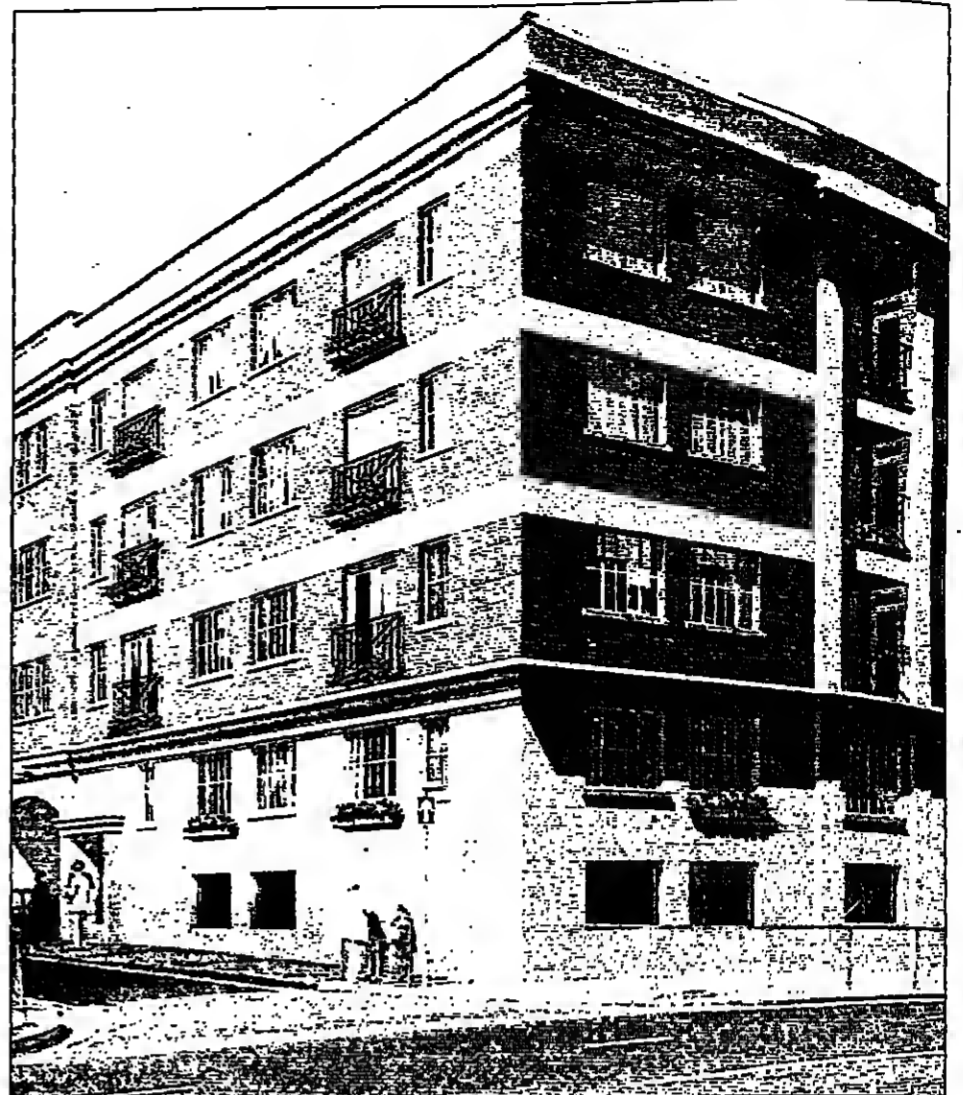
The numbers underpin the trend. During the boom of the 1980s, buildings were worth more for commercial than residential use. Now, in some areas of London, the capital value is higher for residential property. According to Mr Marris, empty office space worth £100 a square foot can increase its value to £125 a square foot with planning permission for residential development. A further incentive is that commercial buildings are exempt from VAT if they are bought for conversion to residential use.

But not all empty offices can be redeveloped. Barratt rejected several candidates before choosing Royal Tower Lodge.

facades and some of the original reception rooms will be retained. In most cases, however, the redundant offices are 1960s blocks which need to be renovated inside and out — the interiors remodelled and facades recast.

But sometimes developers see features in a 1960s office building which can be incorporated in their plans. Try Homes has planning permission to turn the old British Gas offices in Fulham into 77 flats. The Piper Building is adorned with 29 relief panels by the artist John Piper and these will be included in the remodeling. Prices will start from about £125,000.

Some developers minimise conversion work by reclaiming properties that were designed for residential use. London and Henley is developing several buildings in Bayswater which were formerly used as offices. Because they were built as houses, the



CONVERSIONS

MAYFAIR IS full of developments, and a good place to look. Justin Huggler writes. Large town houses which have been used as offices for the past 45 years are becoming homes again. These buildings were sold for commercial use on short leases after the Second World War. The leases are now expiring, and are not being renewed for commercial use.

In south London, Alexander Fleming House in Elephant and Castle, formerly the headquarters of the DHSS, is to be converted by St George and the Imry Group. They will transform Erno Goldfinger's controversial building into 400 flats, with shops, restaurants and leisure facilities. They hope to obtain planning permission for the two-year conversion scheme this autumn and provide flats from £50,000 to £200,000.

Further south, Barratt is planning to convert EK House in Clapham Park Road, SW4, in a neo-Georgian style. The facades will be traditionally styled in honey-coloured brick, with black iron balconies, and the corners dressed in cast white stone. The bottom two storeys will be rendered in white mock ashlar, cement modelled to look like cast stone.

The 38 one and two-bedroom flats will be renamed St Paul's View. The flats will have carpets, light fittings, kitchens and bathrooms and buyers will be able to specify finishing details. Prices from about £70,000 to £135,000.

Additional research by Justin Huggler.
Barratt, 0181-534 4555, London and Henley, 0181-956 2411, Try Homes, 01895 251222.

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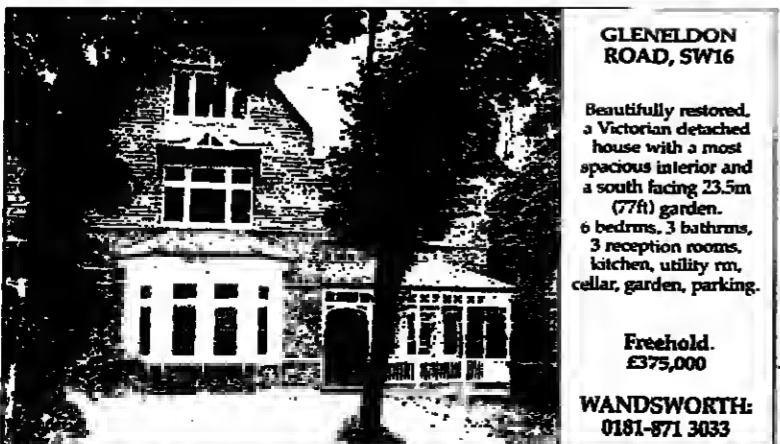
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PEMBROKE WALK, Kensington, W8 Freehold £975,000
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PRIMROSE HILL, NW3 Freehold £550,000
By Primrose Hill Park and Regents Park, a modernised terraced 3 storey house. 4/5 beds, 3 baths, shower rm, c/km, 2/3 receps, kit, store rm, 2 terraces, patio garden, drive, garage. ST JOHN'S WOOD: 0171-722 5556



GLENELDON ROAD, SW16

Beautifully restored, a Victorian detached house with a most spacious interior and a south facing 23.5m (77ft) garden. 6 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, 3 reception rooms, kitchen, utility rm, cellar, garden, parking.

Freehold. £375,000
WANDSWORTH: 0181-871 3033

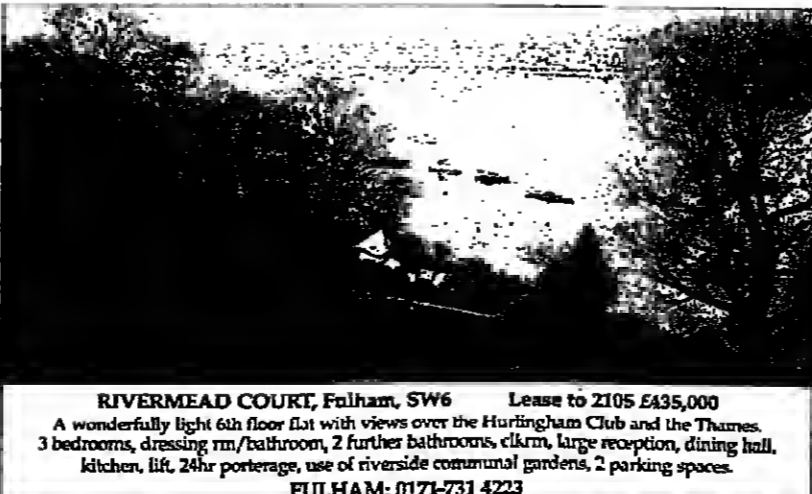


WEST SUSSEX - Crawley Down Price Guide: £675,000
A fine country house in a secluded but accessible position, about 5 miles from East Grinstead. 9 beds, 3 baths, dressing rm, recep hall, 3 receps, kit, flower rm, c/km, shower rm, potential 3 room annexe, 3 single garages, garden, woodland, paddock area. About 2.95 ha (7.3 acres). EAST GRINSTEAD: 01342 326326

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RIVERMEAD COURT, Fulham, SW6 Lease to 2105 £435,000
A wonderfully light 6th floor flat with views over the Hurlingham Club and the Thames. 3 bedrooms, dressing rm/bathroom, 2 further bathrooms, c/km, large reception, dining hall, kitchen, lift, 24hr portage, use of riverside communal gardens, 2 parking spaces. FULHAM: 0171-731 4223



GLOUCESTERSHIRE - Lechlade Price Guide: £485,000
A Cotswold stone house in a lovely lakeside setting in unspoilt countryside. 4/5 beds, 2 baths, 2 receps, stone summer house, double garage, gardens, paddock, lake. About 2.91 ha (7.2 acres). CIRENCESTER: 01285 642244



OXFORDSHIRE - East Hanney Price Guide: £425,000
Exceptionally well constructed, an architect designed house on the edge of the village. 5 beds, 2 baths (e/s shower optional), 2 receps, dining hall, 3 garages, gdn. About 0.5 ha (1.25 acres). OXFORD: 01865 311522



HAMPSHIRE Ropley

About 4 miles from Alresford on a quiet country lane, a pretty colourwashed cottage, reputedly dating from the 1600s, full of charm and character. 4 beds, 2 baths, 2 receps, kit, utility, c/km, double garage. About 0.13 ha (0.33 acre).

Price Guide: £275,000
WINCHESTER: 01962 863131

Handwritten signature or note at the bottom of the page.

PROPERTY

Cheryl Taylor on how townsfolk weary of the rat race can find peace and still make a living in the country

Turning a pursuit into a lifestyle

For an increasing number of people, the ideal property is more than just a place to come home to...

Any property which gives you the chance to shift down a gear starts to look appealing as life in the fast lane loses its glow...

According to Robert Carslake, a partner in estate agents Strutt & Parker in Devon, there is growing demand from well-off townies...



The good life: Mark and Lucy Davies run Maelcombe House in Devon and serve freshly caught crabs to guests

complex, in 7.5 acres of gardens and paddocks, near Blakeney, on the fringe of the Forest of Dean. It comes with three cottages, an all-weather tennis court, croquet lawn, laundry, office and a games room.

Abbots Court Cottages, an award-winning deluxe holiday cottage complex in the Vale of Evesham, 12 miles from Stratford-upon-Avon, is for sale at £1.25 million through Knight Frank. It comprises ten character cottages and a half-timbered, four-bedroom 18th-century house in a courtyard. The complex has a turnover of about £160,000 a year.

RUNNING A SEASIDE IDYLL

About 15 years ago, Mark and Lucy Davies moved to Maelcombe House, a vast, rambling Edwardian house, on the south Devon coast near Prawle Point. They paid £125,000 for the house in 1982, which comes with 25 acres of sub-tropical gardens, a small farm, a plethora of wildlife and its own beach, in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

When Mr and Mrs Davies first saw Maelcombe House, built in 1908 by the district coastguard officer for his private use, it was in a dilapidated state. Little money had been spent on the house in 20 years and it was badly in need of modernisation. Yet it was love at first sight.

Originally, we were looking to grow herbs, because the climate is warm enough to grow half-hardy plants. We had 15 acres in front of the house under bracken and gorse, which we planned for our herb garden. The rest we would use to graze a couple of cows, a few sheep and a pig or two.

PROPERTY

SPAIN: COSTA BLANCA, Florida: FLORIDA HOMES, SPAIN: MERJA. Includes details on property developments in Spain and Florida.

FLORIDA: golf, tennis, boating, great weather, pool food, great peaceful life style. Includes contact information for Florida properties.

LONDON RENTALS: WILKINSON Mansions, ST JAMES'S SW1, WIMBORNE, Wiltshire. Lists various rental properties in London and the South West.

PORTUGAL: PARQUE DA FLORESTA Premier Golf & Leisure Resort. Details on a resort in the Algarve region of Portugal.

LONDON RENTALS: BARNINGHAM Selection of flats, BUCKINGHAM, 2 bed 2 bath, BUCKINGHAM, 2 bed 2 bath. Lists rental properties in London.

COUNTRY RENTALS: 3 BED Farm cottage in Herefordshire, 3 BED Farm cottage in Herefordshire. Lists country rental properties.

SPAIN: LEISURE OWNERSHIP ON SEA AND LAND. Unique purchase opportunity plan in Spain.

SW14: S/c flat decor & fully furnished to exceptional standard. Includes contact information for a property in SW14.

FULHAM: lux urban flat on Dwyer, 3 bed 2 bath, kitchen/diner, lga lounge, all mod cons. Includes contact information for a property in Fulham.

AGRICULTURAL SMALLHOLDINGS: IN THE southeast, agricultural smallholdings are becoming increasingly popular and hard to find. Lists agricultural smallholdings for sale.

KENNELS AND FISHERIES: THOSE WHO like dogs and cats might prefer West Burton farmhouse, a five-bedroom, Grade II listed, Queen Anne farmhouse ten miles from Dorchester, Dorset. Lists kennels and fisheries for sale.

RENTALS DIRECTORY: CENTRAL LONDON PITY, NOE GLASMAN & CO, WIMBORNE, Wiltshire. A directory of rental services.

Maelcombe House will go on sale next month. Includes a photograph of Maelcombe House and details on its sale.

THE TIMES Subscriptions. The Times will match any subscription offer you receive from other daily national newspapers. Includes contact information for The Times.

Various small advertisements and notices on the right edge of the page, including real estate listings and local business ads.

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SHOPPING



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Perfection in a small world

As a child I ached for a dolls' house. Not a modern one, but an old-fashioned town house with a basement kitchen and an attic bedroom for the under housemaid...

made from the real materials - wood furniture, silver cutlery, oil paintings, hand-painted porcelain, hand-blocked wallpapers...

SHOP OF THE WEEK

This specialist shop in New King's Road, southwest London, is a Mecca for dolls' house fans from around the world...

There, too, is a range of items for children to furnish their own dolls' houses, but this is primarily a shop for the enthusiast or older child.

STEPHANIE LEWIS The Singing Tree, 69 New King's Road, London SW6 4SG 0171-736 4527. Open Mon-Sat, 10am-5.30pm. Catalogue £5.

A disgruntled buyer writes...

You spot what you're looking for and want to buy it. Easy. Well, not always

Here's a little test to try out at your next dinner party. When the conversation comes to one of those hiatuses where the only sound is the evening's death-rattle...

We went to Ikea the other day, as it happens. We were moving home and needed a sofa, a double mattress and a wardrobe for the children...

After 20 minutes meandering around some of London's less attractive housing estates, we found the road again, and followed it, and followed the signs to Ikea...

Looking back, buying the sofa was to be the highlight of our afternoon. We'd seen what we wanted and, eventually, bought it. We were to see other things, and not come close.



sales assistant in one place for long enough for them to help you, and they would give you a little printout that said you had ordered something...

Ikea admits that since the store was built it has become victim to its own success and it is taking time for the company to develop what it feels is a satisfactory level of customer service...

leaving out the bit where we discovered that our double mattress was not, in fact, waiting for us, but had to be fetched, as did the flat-packed wardrobe...

carry things upstairs," one of them said. So I heaved the stuff upstairs and put the wardrobe together...

Now all we have to do is wait for the sofa to be delivered. The living room is on the ground floor so, unless the delivery men are not insured for carrying things through doorways, we should get it in to the room all right.

But wait - there's a postscript. A couple of days ago my wife decided to put together a children's sofa-bed we'd bought; a cute little thing that seats two small bodies snugly and then unfolds into a child-length mattress...

Chris Campling

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Senior Citizens with money in the bank should read this before it's too late. If you have worked hard all your life and managed to put away a nest egg, you could end up losing most of your life savings because of exorbitant nursing home fees...

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The Vinegar Book. You will be amazed at the multitude of uses for vinegar. This common household product is packed with goodness. Includes: 'Remove carpet stains', 'Remove odours', 'Clean brass, copper and pewter', 'Soothe aching feet', 'Fade age spots', 'Cool sunburn', 'Treat burns', 'Remove ink stains', 'Treat waxy stings', 'Banish dandruff', 'Countertops, floors, windows and fixtures will shine', 'And many, many more.'

Arthritis Relief. If you suffer from arthritis, you should know about a new book: The Complete Arthritis Handbook. This book contains the latest up-to-date information on arthritis, including the newest natural and medical treatments. The handbook explains who gets arthritis - how, where and why. It goes on to report on what is available for the relief of pain, including a country doctor's opinion on what to sip with meals and his opinions on which foods are best to eat and which others to avoid.

Your Arteries Can Clean Themselves. Your arteries can eliminate, by themselves, the deposits obstructing them. In exactly the same way as a jet of water can loosen mud from a wall, your blood flow can rinse out your arteries if it is not full of harmful impurities. In a recent book Alexis Azimiev explains how a natural diet can significantly improve arterial problems. Recent observations show that the traditional 'anti-cholesterol' diets fail to clean out the arteries properly. It would appear, for example, that hunder eaten in reasonable quantities is better for your arteries than margarine, contrary to what has been recommended for years. Alexis Azimiev's fascinating book allows you to eat enjoyably while at the same time rinsing out your arteries. Your Arteries Can Clean Themselves - £9.95 post paid (coupon below)

Prostate Relief. If you suffer prostate problems such as: getting up nights to urinate, urgency and frequency, delay and dribbling, pain and discomfort - you should know about a new book: Your Prostate: What Every Man Over 40 Needs To Know Now! This book contains the latest up-to-date information on the Prostate - how it functions, what can go wrong, how it can be treated, and how to protect yourself from Prostate problems. The book gives you specific facts on the brand new treatments available for Prostate disorders - from new drugs and medical treatments to natural remedies. The book tells you about 3 natural nutrients reported to relieve Prostate symptoms in 6 clinical studies, yet little known to most doctors (available at health food stores). You'll discover which foods may help the Prostate and which foods may cause irritation. The book covers actual case histories of men who suffered Prostate problems and how they were able to overcome their problems. Many men are putting up with troublesome Prostate symptoms because they are unaware of new treatments, and the welcomed relief that is now available. Get all the facts. Order Your Prostate: What Every Man Over 40 Needs To Know Now - £9.95 post paid (coupon below)

Bright punk on dope

Frances Fyfield is irritated by the cocky tone that pervades the true story of a drug smuggler's adventures

HOWARD MARKS does not mean to congratulate himself with this book, which merely refers to one of the dozens of borrowed identities, pronounced "Nice" as in the biscuit and purloined from someone in need and used to facilitate his enormous drug-peddling enterprise. This spanned the 1970s and 1980s, culminating in several fortunes gained and lost and a seven-year prison term in America.

Marks was a gifted Oxford graduate, good-looking and remarkably healthy even now in a Mick Jagger kind of way, evidence of the fact that the wages of his kind of sin is cheque-book journalism while the fortunes of the farmers who produced the contraband he sold by the ton are unlikely to have changed. His was a once-famous career, born when soft-drug peddling was ridiculously easy, although the element of courage cannot be ignored.

The impression given is of a man stoned throughout, although his memory, if accurate, seems prodigious. Deal after deal is described: Hong Kong, Thailand, America, one hotel and airport after another, until the bulk of the book becomes a blur and the recitation of his cleverness and brinkmanship as entertaining and dated as *Mrs Dale's Diary*. Marks may be charis-

MR NICE:
An Autobiography
By Howard Marks
Secker & Warburg, £16.99
ISBN 0 436 20305 7

matic, but his prose is not and although fascinating material lurks in there, you need stamina to find the pebbles under mountains of sand.

Those who bought an



Marks: needs a good slap

Annabelinda dress in the 1980s might like to know that the business was founded on laundered money. Others might be surprised to learn that Frederick of Nina and Frederick became a small-time drugs smuggler. Who cares if Mr Nice gives them away? Or that a fortune teller at a fair may be trying to elicit enough information about you

to get a copy of your birth certificate for yet another alias?

What a clever, likeable chap Marks is, boasting with such modest ease of his skill in beating the system, as he did in 1981 by a totally spurious, artfully detailed defence of being not a smuggler but a spy. Well done, but why should anyone believe him now? The jury "just didn't want us nice guys to spend countless years in prison for transporting beneficial herbs," he smirks. So utterly spiteful of the American authorities to fail to believe that stuff, how mean of them. It really hurt when I was caught, he says. Played hell with family life.

Can he really pat himself on the back for being in the vanguard of devastation and for being a liar and a cheat with never a thought for those who actually need the protection of the law? Can he not see, even as he uses half-baked idealism to justify greed, that marijuana may be all very well for his contemporaries but not for the endangered 12-year old child at the end of his chain? In this autobiography, Marks emerges as a blind, bland and boring believer in his own legend. No doubt he has invented health-giving hallucinogens for his own children. Like him? You want to slap him.

Bizarre speculations on the psychology of a great actor



Kingly rule: Laurence Olivier in his self-produced, self-directed 1945 film of *Henry V*

IF FREUD had never existed, Roger Lewis would have had to invent him. As a critic of performance, he does not so much analyse actors as psychoanalyse them. He states that this will not be a conventional biography — although it is characteristic of his approach that he immediately offers several examples of the anecdotes he is not going to tell — but will rather examine how Olivier's roles "related to his psychological and emotional needs".

Lewis's Olivier is Orestes, pursued by the Eumenides or, at least, by T. S. Eliot's drawing-room equivalents. Guilt is his motor — for abandoning his wives and neglecting his children, for being abroad at the death of his father and the outbreak of war and, above all, for his mother's early death when he was 12.

This is pertinent up to a point: the problem is that Lewis pushes the point to absurd lengths. He declares, on the basis of a dubious reading of an offhand remark, that Olivier's sexual

Daggers of the mind

THE REAL LIFE OF LAURENCE OLIVIER
By Roger Lewis
Century, £17.99
ISBN 0 7126 7550 7

curiosity was awakened by his mother. Even more wildly, he insists that, in casting the 27-year-old Eileen Herlie opposite his own 40-year-old Hamlet, he was "wish-fully bringing his mother back".

Similar bizarre speculations fill the book, substituting for either sustained narrative or informed criticism. Lewis clearly wants to be Kenneth Tynan and shares his taste in imagery. Tynan, however, was a witness to Olivier's performances in

both rehearsal room and stalls. Lewis relies on celluloid, which puts a disproportionate emphasis on Olivier's screen roles. Much of his major work thus goes unmentioned.

The inadequacies of the book's analysis are matched by the impermeability of its prose. Lewis declares that he has "spent many years developing a baroque and multi-layered manner". This seems to be a euphemism for wild hyperbole (Olivier is "Jupiter, Zeus, King of the Gods, King of Kings"), attention-seeking analogies and irrelevant references ("Brecon, where this book is being written incidentally"). He writes not in paragraphs but in parentheses, so that reading a passage becomes the literary equivalent of channel-hopping.

It is hard to know at whom this book is aimed. Anyone who knows little of Olivier's life and work will be confused; anyone who knows more will be incredulous.

MICHAEL ARDITTI

Blues for a bluestocking

THE REMARKABLE JOURNEY OF MISS TRANBY QUIRKE
By Elizabeth Ridley
Virago, £9.99
ISBN 9 781860 492259

MISS Tranby Quirke, as a woman, is invisible. She is 34 and lives alone above a bakery in Camberwell. By day she teaches at Semperton Institute, where the young wives of middle-class businessmen receive "quality tuition in the gentle and feminine arts of cooking, household management, child-rearing and personal presentation". In the evening she works on behalf of the British Society for the Aid of Distressed Spinners and Gentlewomen in Need. Her commitment to the Votes for Women movement is discreet but fervent. At night, by the light of her candle, she practises automatic writing, during which her fantasy takes her on remarkable journeys in the steps of famous explorers — Livingstone, Drake and Vasco da Gama.

This account of her life, written on the night of her (attempted) suicide, includes those extravagant passages of automatic writing, but its main subject is several remarkable journeys, real and imagined, in pursuit of and in flight from love and death, exploring the secret topography of her own heart. Tranby loves and is loved by Lysette, one of her students, who first approached Tranby for advice — her husband was beating her for her failure to conceive. Tranby's counsel comes straight from the pages of the health manuals of the day. "I grabbed a piece of paper off my desk and scribbled 'Do not run!'" But before long Tranby and Lysette are running headlong into each other's arms.

Fear of discovery by the staff of Semperton's, by Lysette's husband, and by love itself, which she has learnt to fear, keeps Tranby always dithering on the quay, unable to embrace the idea of the Great Departure into a life where she will no longer be invisible.

where the physical details of all her imagined landscapes will at last become real. But there are moments of triumph which the world cannot take away. When Tranby and Lysette first lie in each other's arms above the Camberwell bakery, "Princess circumlocutist me. What the earth said to Ferdinand Magellan. You are



Drake: fantasy journeys

the first to have circumnavigated me.

Elizabeth Ridley is a recent graduate of the East Anglia creative-writing course, but writing like this cannot be taught. The credit for a novel of such harmonious sensibility and strength must all be hers. Humour, historical flavour, political astuteness and a style which affords the reader a pleasure akin to that of watching a bird in flight, combining precision and a relish of the freedom which is a writer's heady privilege, season a love story of unusual beauty.

HELEN STEVENSON

Family treasures

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON III is about to follow his illustrious ancestor into fiction — and, like him, he is obsessed with buried treasure. In fact, he is one of America's most experienced deep-wreck divers, and his novel, *Torchlight*, coming from Hodder next year, is about a mission to salvage a real-life ship, the *USS Norfolk*. It was torpedoed in 1917 — and is believed to have been carrying Kerensky's gold from Russia.

Lady (Vanessa) Hannam, a former Worth model now married to Tory MP Sir John Hannam, has signed up with Headline for a novel to be called Division Bells, about a young widow who marries a Conservative MP — only to

BOOK NEWS

discover that she is not a natural MP's wife. Trouble is store somewhere?

HAROLD BLOOM, the American professor who put the cat among the academic pigeons with his list of the great works of literature, *The Western Canon*, has turned his attention to the millennium. In *Omens of Millennium*, coming in November from Fourth Estate, Bloom tries to rescue the supposed "signs" of millennial fever — angels, dreams and so on — from their present debased condition and restore them to their original grandeur in the world's religious traditions.

A pregnant pause

THIS is National Pregnancy Week — presumably someone's old to hustle along those dawdling spermatozoa — so here are some books for the perinatally family. Of course, the new baby will not mind which books you buy — she will enjoy eating them all.

Get to the mood with *Welcome to the World (Barefoot Books, £12.99, ISBN 1 898000 34 4)*, a stunning compilation by Nikki Siegen-Smith of photographs and poems on the theme of babies. The photos are of more consistent quality than the poetry, but there are memorable moments such as Eavan Boland's *Night Feed* — "I tipple in, / I lift you up / Wriggling / In your rosy, zipped sleeper. / Yes, this is the hour! / For the early bird and me! / When funder is keeper."

Expectant siblings need lots of extra love and reassurance. Sam McBratney's charming *Guess How Much I Love You*

CHILDREN'S BOOKS

has come out in board form (Walker, £3.99, ISBN 0 7445 4918 3). *Happy Birthday* (Walker, £9.99, ISBN 0 7445 4012 7) is an ideal book for a pregnant mum to read with her toddler. Robie Harris's text recalls the surprises and laughter of a baby's first day, while Michael Emberley's gentle but accurate pictures prepare a child for the startling appearance of a newborn baby. Lisa Kopper's *Daisy is a Mummy* (Hamish Hamilton, £9.99, ISBN 0 241 13511 7) brings children into the routine of baby-care through the eyes of Daisy, the dog, and her new puppies: "Mummy cleans up her baby's mess. But Daisy doesn't."

The trials of parenthood are on show in Paul and Emma Rogers's *Cat's Kittens* (Viking,

£10.99, ISBN 0 670 86255 X), in which a feral cat teaches her kittens to fend for themselves. The book's strength is Sophy Williams's rich drawings.

Ten thousand babies are born every 55 minutes, according to the Joshua Morris see-through book, *The Miracle of Birth* (£8.99, ISBN 1 85724 985 2) by Jenny Bryan. The book is crammed with other, less depressing facts and easily understood acetate pictures of a baby's development in the womb, making it a good source-book for inquisitive over-sixes — who will also be well served by a series called *The Year I was Born* from Puffin which offers an easy digest of the news at the time of a child's birth. The edition for 1990 is just out (£4.99, ISBN 0 14 038063 9). Years 1983 onwards are available and 1991 will be out next year.

SARAH JOHNSON

Do Booker winners still sell books?

The Times Bestseller List

HARDBACKS

	No weeks	Last week	Weekly sales
1 LONGITUDE Dava Sobel (<i>Fourth Estate, £12</i>)	2	1	1,341
2 POPCORN Ben Elton (<i>Simon & Schuster, £12.99</i>)	6	7	588
3 BEANO BOOK: 1997 (<i>D. C. Thomson, £4.99</i>)	2	14	431
4 TOMB OF GOD Richard Andrews (<i>Little, Brown, £20</i>)	1	2	396
5 STAND BY, STAND BY Chris Ryan (<i>Century, £15.99</i>)	6	4	394
6 DESPERATION Stephen King (<i>Hodder, £16.99</i>)	0	0	377
7 WAR WALKS Richard Holmes (<i>BBC, £16.99</i>)	4	5	340
8 GUNPOWDER PLOT Antonia Fraser (<i>Weidenfeld, £20</i>)	4	5	337
9 X-FILES: RUINS K. J. Anderson (<i>Voyager, £12.99</i>)	13	18	327
10 HEINEMANN ENGLISH DICTIONARY Katherine Harber (<i>Heinemann, £6.99</i>)	4	20	325
11 CONCISE OXFORD DICTIONARY OF CURRENT ENGLISH H.W. Fowler (<i>Oxford University Press, £15.99</i>)	39	8	322
12 COMPLETE BABY AND TODDLER MEAL PLANNER Annabel Karmel (<i>Ebury, £9.99</i>)	39	13	316
13 DELIA SMITH'S SUMMER COLLECTION Delia Smith (<i>BBC, £14.99</i>)	39	3	308
14 BROONS AND OOR WILLIE 1936-96 (<i>D. C. Thomson, £5.99</i>)	0	0	279
15 SEVEN SPIRITUAL LAWS OF SUCCESS Deepak Chopra (<i>Bantam, £9.99</i>)	5	25	268
16 LETTERLAND (<i>HarperCollins, £4.99</i>)	4	31	257
17 MILLER'S ANTIQUE PRICE GUIDE: 1997 M & JH Miller (<i>Millers, £21.99</i>)	4	10	246
18 THE HUNCHBACK OF NOTRE DAME Victor Hugo (<i>Ladybird, £1.99</i>)	14	11	221
19 FEET OF CLAY Terry Pratchett (<i>Gollancz, £15.99</i>)	15	41	219
20 DICKIE Ed. Brian Scovell (<i>Partridge, £12.99</i>)	13	56	216

PAPERBACKS

1 GREEN MILE 6: COFFEY ON THE MILE Stephen King (<i>Penguin, £1.99</i>)	0	0	8,582
2 NOTES FROM A SMALL ISLAND Bill Bryson (<i>Black Swan, £6.99</i>)	5	15	705
3 THE HORSE WHISPERER Nicholas Evans (<i>Corgi, £5.99</i>)	14	2	2,017
4 THE HIGHWAY CDDE Dept. of Transport (<i>HMSD, £0.99</i>)	7	12	1,331
5 THE GHOST ROAD Pat Barker (<i>Penguin, £6.99</i>)	9	4	1,318
6 SOPHIE'S WORLD Jostein Gaarder (<i>Phoenix, £6.99</i>)	27	11	1,264
7 GREEN MILE 5: NIGHT JOURNEY Stephen King (<i>Penguin, £1.99</i>)	7	10	1,152
8 REGENERATION Pat Barker (<i>Penguin, £5.99</i>)	39	6	1,082
9 BEHIND THE SCENES AT THE MUSEUM Kate Adkinsoo (<i>Black Swan, £6.99</i>)	37	8	1,055
10 HIDDEN LIVES: A FAMILY MEMOIR Margaret Foster (<i>Penguin, £6.99</i>)	6	9	993
11 FROM POTTER'S FIELD Patricia Cornwell (<i>Warner, £5.99</i>)	12	19	922
12 HIGH FIDELITY Nick Hornby (<i>Indigo, £5.99</i>)	22	21	914
13 INDEPENDENCE DAY Dean Devlin (<i>Bantam, £4.99</i>)	5	8	913
14 COLLINS GEM FRENCH DICTIONARY (<i>HarperCollins, £3.99</i>)	39	43	902
15 ENIGMA Robert Harris (<i>Arrow, £5.99</i>)	19	76	847
16 PLACE CALLED FREEDOM Ken Follet (<i>Pan, £5.99</i>)	4	5	836
17 THE LOST WORLD Michael Crichton (<i>Arrow, £5.99</i>)	10	16	843
18 COMPLETE THEORY TEST FOR CARS AND MOTORCYCLES (<i>Driving Standards Agency (HMSD), £9.99</i>)	24	5	818
19 THE BEST OF FRIENDS Joanna Trollope (<i>Black Swan, £6.99</i>)	19	33	781
20 EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE Daniel Goleman (<i>Bloomsbury, £7.99</i>)	2	44	771

This Times list monitored 35,840 titles representing high-street sales of £4.4 million during the week.

THIS week we have asked the Whitaker BookTrack computer to look into the current sales performance in 600 shops of the recent winners of the Booker Prize for Fiction. Our chart below takes the 11 Booker Prize-winning authors for the past ten years (in 1992 the prize was split between Michael Ondaatje and Barry Unsworth), plus Salman Rushdie, who won the Booker of Bookers in 1993, and it lists these 12 in order of the number of copies of their books sold in the latest four-week period covered by the computer. The list takes into account all fiction by these authors, not just their prize-winning novel. We also give their place in the first 5,000 of all books sold in that period.

Pat Barker, whose novel *The Ghost Road* won last



Rushdie: at No 38 and 1198

year's Booker, is not surprisingly at the head of the list. It sold 12,560 copies in the four-week period. Two other novels by her take second and third place, selling 6,254 and 4,830 copies respectively.

The other 22 books sold

between 3,287 copies (Rushdie's *The Moor's Last Sigh*) and 153 copies (Peter Carey's *Unusual Life of Tristan Smith*). Only two winning authors of the past ten years do not appear at all in the top 5,000 books — Kingsley Amis and Barry Unsworth. Amis is, for me, a sad surprise (though I admit other readers may be less surprised, or sad). Unsworth is bound to return during the next month with his new and well-reviewed novel *After Hannibal*.

The only hardbacks in the list are A. S. Byatt's *Babel Tower* and Roddy Doyle's *The Woman Who Walked Into Doors*. The Booker Prize seems still to be working its magic for its winners — but in a paperback world.

DERWENT MAY

BOOKER PRIZE-WINNING AUTHORS' SALES

Author	Book	Chart position in the top 5,000 in the four weeks to August 10	Copies sold in the four-week period	Year of author's Booker Prize
Pat Barker	<i>The Ghost Road</i>	1	12,560	1995
Pat Barker	<i>Regeneration</i>	2	6,254	1995
Pat Barker	<i>The Eye in the Door</i>	3	4,830	1995
Salman Rushdie	<i>The Moor's Last Sigh</i>	4	3,287	1981
Salman Rushdie	<i>The Lost Dog and Other Stories</i>	5	2,233	1987
Salman Rushdie	<i>The Unconsolable</i>	6	966	1989
Salman Rushdie	<i>Paddy Clarke Ha Ha Ha</i>	7	680	1993
Salman Rushdie	<i>The Woman Who Walked Into Doors</i>	8	554	1993
Salman Rushdie	<i>Barrytown Trilogy</i>	9	496	1995
Salman Rushdie	<i>Fanshawe Road</i>	10	496	1991
Salman Rushdie	<i>Midnight's Children</i>	11	401	1981
Salman Rushdie	<i>The Remains of the Day</i>	12	407	1989
Salman Rushdie	<i>The Van</i>	13	401	1993
Salman Rushdie	<i>The English Patient</i>	14	295	1992
Salman Rushdie	<i>Union Street</i>	15	271	1995
Salman Rushdie	<i>How Late It Was, How Late</i>	16	259	1995
Salman Rushdie	<i>Birds of Heaven</i>	17	238	1991
Salman Rushdie	<i>Angels and Insects</i>	18	231	1990
Salman Rushdie	<i>Maisie Stories</i>	19	222	1991
Salman Rushdie	<i>Astonishing the Gods</i>	20	214	1990
Salman Rushdie	<i>Babel Tower</i>	21	204	1990
Salman Rushdie	<i>Possession</i>	22	169	1988
Salman Rushdie	<i>Oscar and Lucinda</i>	23	167	1995
Salman Rushdie	<i>Moon Tiger</i>	24	164	1987
Salman Rushdie	<i>The Unusual Life of Tristan Smith</i>	25	153	1988

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سكوتيا للادب



How an 'ailing' wife discovered the truth

Page 2



Is this the shape of the new Silver Arrows?

Page 5



SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 7 1996

Boxster, you could be a contender

Porsche is weighing in to a softer market with its new sports car, says Kevin Eason

Her only question was: what colour? The woman buyer was a godsend for the Porsche management as they struggled to explain their search for a new audience.

Because Porsches are supposed to be cars for men. James Dean looked mean, moody and magnificent in his 550 Spyder, all Brylcreem and white teeth, the star in the car to die for. Except that Dean actually did die in his Porsche in 1955, a crash that helped turn a three-film wonderboy into a legend.

If Dean had been driving a Ford Escort, maybe he would not have ended up as a footnote in motoring history. Except that his tangled car is captured in lurid technicolour by every picture library because crashing a Porsche is almost a romantic event.

The link between speed and rebellion was irresistible, with pundits deciding on the basis that he drove a Porsche that he must have been driving flat-out, carefree and reckless, ready to die young rather than live life as Mr Boring. It all helped cement an image of the Porsche as the car with power that could not be tamed, even by a man with Dean's charisma.

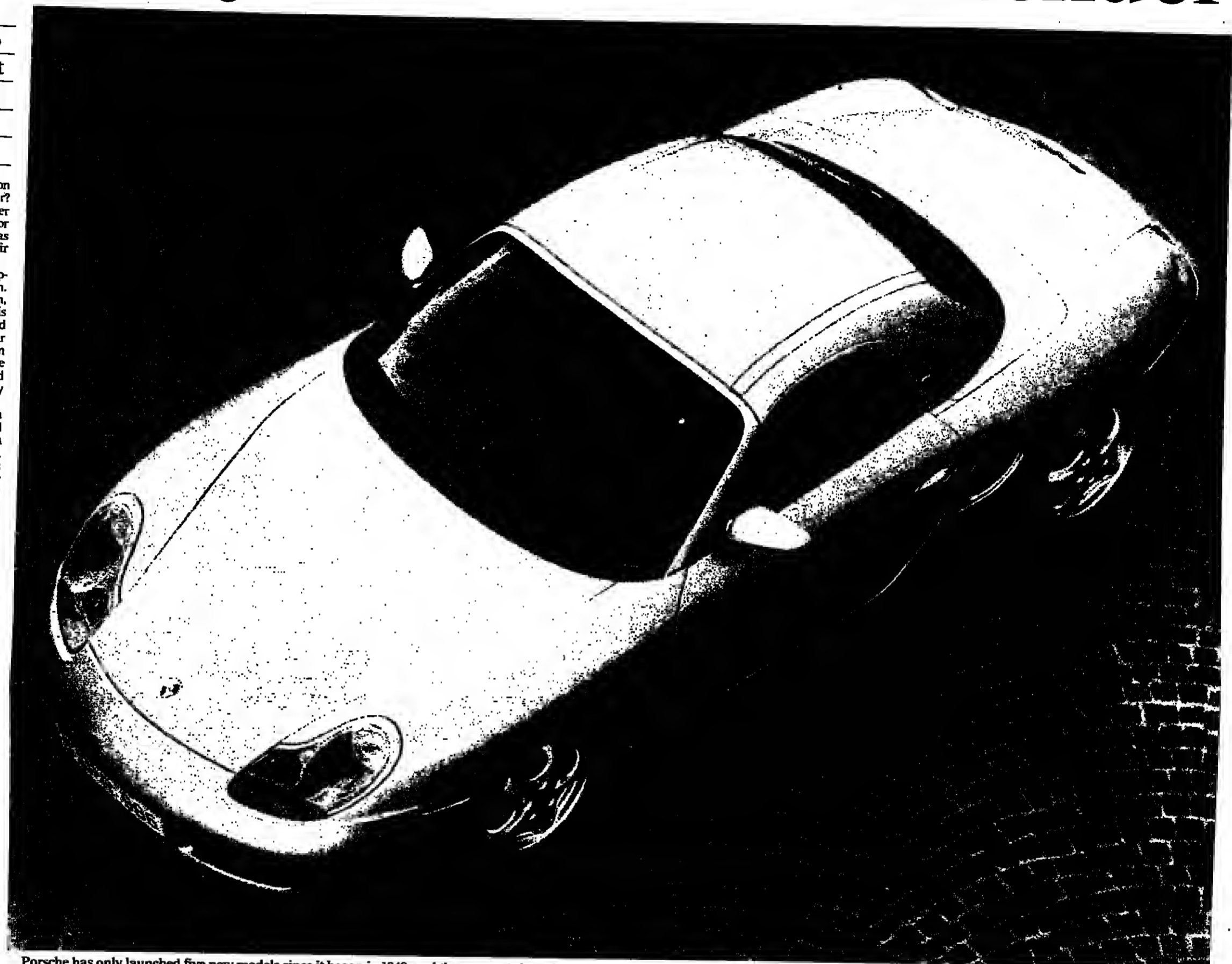
Actually, the crash was not Dean's fault and had little to do with whether his fabulous Spyder was fast or not.

So when Porsche launches a car with overtones of the old Spyder and targets women buyers, what of the legend? What is to happen to all those chaps with hairy chests and gold bracelets?

Porsche has only launched five new models since it was founded in 1948, so you can bet that when they got around to the Boxster, they thought about its potential buyers in some depth. Kevin Gaskell, Porsche's managing director in Britain, says that typical customers for Porsche's staple 911 — costing £59,000 to £94,000 — are 44-year-old professional men with 2.5 cars already, as well as 2.5 children: Mr Average Rich Guy who likes the sort of car so expensive and exclusive that only around 1,300 will be sold here this year. In fact...

But the Boxster is different. Costing around £35,000, it is looking for an audience that combines money and pragmatism — Dinkies (Double Incomes No Kids), singles and people apparently searching for "an active style of self-fulfilment leading to a new, experience-oriented philosophy in life... more critical in their assessment of virtues such as discipline, obedience and fulfilment of duties", according to the Porsche press pack. (If you meet someone like that, keep it to yourself.)

Porsche only needs to find 1,000 of them to sign up annually for a Boxster, and they have succeeded. That search apparently includes women who increasingly have a chequebook of their own large enough to buy a Porsche. They don't usually, because of

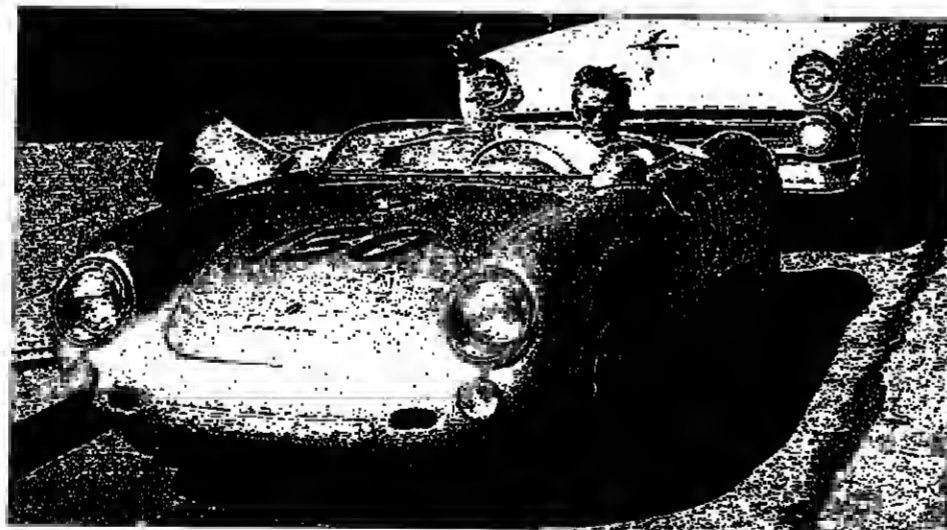


Porsche has only launched five new models since it began in 1948, and the new car's introduction involved much thought about its market, which includes women with enough money to buy a Boxster

that James Dean bloke-ish image, which is supposed to mean that Porsches are undriveable by all but film legends and men with medallions, and ignores the basic virtues of luggage-space and practicality.

Then up popped the girl. Young, long-legged, affluent and unaffected by image, she walked up to Gaskell and simply wanted to know when she could have one and which colour would be best. In the space of a day, Gaskell had converted a complete set of potential buyers: middle-aged men, a bunch of young guns and a woman, all desperate for a Boxster of their own.

This end of the market used to be wide open: now there are more cars vying for attention than teams in football's premiership. Mercedes has launched its SLK roadster, there is the Alfa Spider, the upcoming Jaguar XK8, the MGF, Fiat Coupé, and James Bond's car, the BMW Z3. The Merc is fractionally staid and has an unappealing four-cylinder engine; the Jaguar is probably too expensive; the



James Dean encapsulated the old image: tough, daredevil and testosterone-charged

MGF is too mass-market; the build quality of the Spider and Fiat is still untested, while the Z3 is pretty but comes from the maker of reps' cars.

The Boxster has the sexiest engine note, drives like a dream and looks as distinctive as James Dean's Spyder.

There was no way to find the

limits of grip and performance driving around the back roads of Germany this week, except to discover that the limits were so far away that the Boxster felt wonderfully safe. There was enough spirit and confidence in the car though to tell me that Porsche will have no trouble selling the Boxster.

The styling is gloriously reminiscent of that Dean Spyder: curvy, low — and dead cute. The interior is a blend of modern, leather-upholstered luxury and quirky modernity, although it seems a tad twee to have the rev counter as the central dashboard dial and not the speedometer, the clock

most Porsche drivers would have their eyes on.

The soft hood peels back electronically in 12 seconds, apparently a record among convertible makers, who seem to have set up a new unofficial race for getting the hood down quickest. Better still, there is actually luggage-space — a

real boot to put things in. In the SLK, the top comes down and turns the boot into a biscuit barrel but the Porsche is unaffected, with proper storage space at the front, and at the back, because the engine is mid-mounted and slung deep in the car's hull.

Performance is no record-

breaker, but 200bhp is masses even for the committed driver in a lightweight car. The Boxster is a rare mix of sports car and hatchback — a supercar for a trip to Tesco's so stylish that James Dean could have loaded his beans and beer into the Boxster and still looked a legend.



Fast and fun: the new design acknowledges practicalities such as luggage space

Engine: flat-six 2.5-litre producing 204bhp, feeding rear wheels.
Performance: 0 to 62mph in 6.9 seconds (Tiptronic gearbox version, 7.6 seconds); braking from 62mph to 0mph in 2.7 seconds; acceleration to 125mph in 30.8 seconds; braking from 125mph to 0mph in 5.6 seconds. Top speed 149mph (manual).

146mph (Tiptronic). Fuel consumption 31.7 miles to the gallon average (manual); 30mpg (Tiptronic).
Equipment: specialised roof rack which fits when the roof is folded; two separate boots offering a combined total of 260 litres of space.
Price: expected at £35,000.

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So you convince the policeman that you were speeding because your "wife" needs to get to hospital. What next?

Old trick that backfired badly

This is a true story. I have changed the names of the people involved, but all other details are as told to me by two of the people concerned. One evening recently Michael arrived home from work to find his wife, Alison, and one of her women friends, Angela, sitting in the kitchen. Angela had been about to drive home but her car would not start. Michael had a look at the car. He could not find the problem so he offered to drive Angela home.

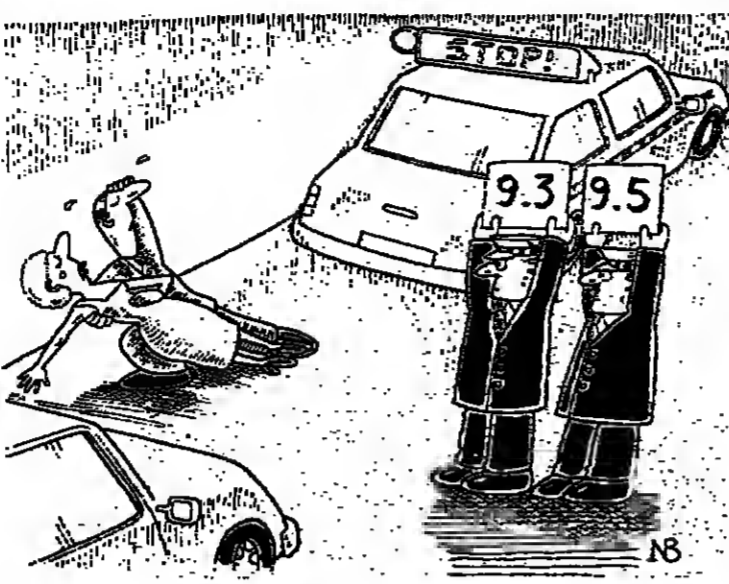
DRIVEN TO DISTRACTION



Peter Barnard

At speed on a dual carriageway, Michael saw blue lights flashing in his mirror. He already had points for speeding and did not need more. As Michael slowed down for the police, he said to Angela: "Pretend you're in pain." When the police officer approached the car, he saw the woman passenger grasping her stomach in agony. Michael said he was rushing his "wife" to hospital. She had a history of stomach problems. Please...

Michael's car to the hospital. Once there, Angela's assumed illness almost turned to heart failure when the kindly police officer led them into the hospital's A&E department and right up to the receptionist. Angela had to see a doctor, who could find nothing wrong but ordered some X-rays. After these were taken, the doctor was non-committal. Angela was given pain killers and allowed to leave. Later, the police officer returned to his station, which was not far from the hospital, noted the incident in his log and signed off his shift. Michael and Angela, feeling somewhat ashamed, needed a drink. The police officer, after a busy shift, also needed a drink.



The policeman was halfway through a pint when Michael and Angela walked in. Angela's face, which had changed colour with remarkable speed several times that evening, now matched a traffic light.

The officer was immediately suspicious that someone with severe stomach pain two hours ago should now be in a public house. Nonetheless he exchanged pleasantries with Michael and Angela, who had the foresight to order soft drinks. Angela explained what had happened at the hospital. The policeman left, though he remained suspicious; he thought he had a case of wasting police time. The next day, the policeman made

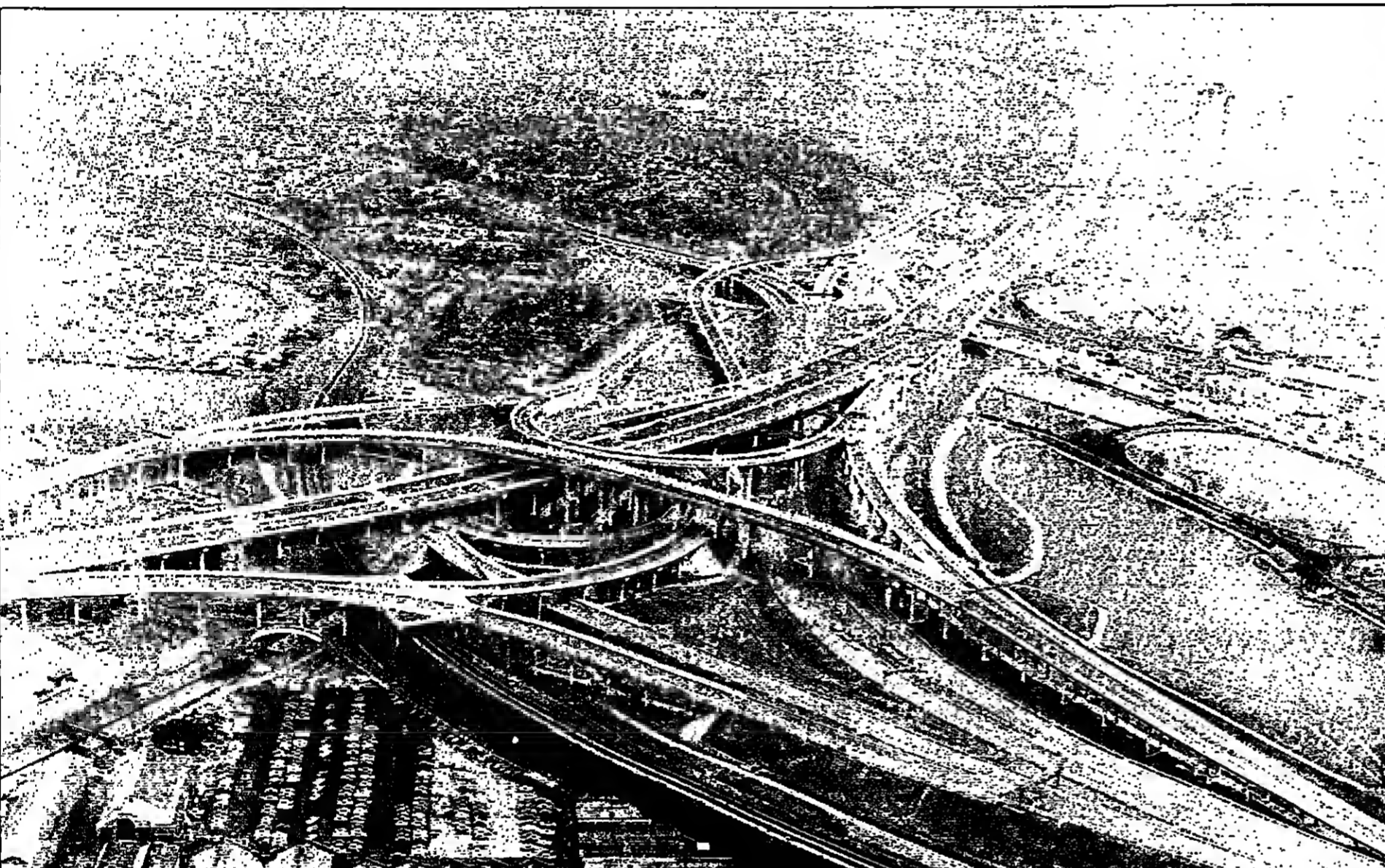
an informal check with the hospital. There was no Angela Greenwood, the name the policeman remembered from Michael's driving licence, but there had been an Angela Thomas. The policeman knew that some married women continued using their maiden names and in any event, he had learnt enough to decide that there was no case against Michael and Angela.

Michael's wife also telephoned the hospital that day, to enquire about her friend who had been admitted the previous night. She was suspicious of Michael's relationship with Angela, the more so after Michael had telephoned from the pub with a story about police escorts and Angela's stomach. The other relevant call made in the next few days was from the hospital, to Angela. More X-rays were required. Angela thought that this was some horrific practical joke. This possibility was almost as terrifying as the truth. The second set of X-rays confirmed that Angela had a tumour. Fortunately it was benign and operable and she has now fully recovered. Recovery from the night as a whole will take a little longer. Michael was so chastened by the trauma that he decided to seek out the police officer and tell him the whole story as an act of contrition. The officer, a wise and experienced man, decided that no further punishment was required.

AA GRIDLOCK GUIDE

- LONDON**
 - A21 Orpington; roadworks on Sevenoaks Road between Green Street Green and Stone House Lane. Delays at peak periods.
 - A406 East Finchley; North Circular Road down to single lane at various points between A1 Falckon Way and Colney Hatch Lane flyover as major roadworks continue.
 - A4 Chiswick; major roadworks on the Great West Road, with traffic reduced to two lanes between the end of the M4 elevated section and Sutton Court Road during the day, and overnight down to a single lane both ways.
 - M4 junctions 2-3; one lane closed both ways between the elevated section and Heston services.
 - A1153 Dagenham; width restrictions on Lodge Avenue for roadworks at junction with Woodward Road. Peak-time delays.
- SOUTH EAST**
 - A329 Reading; Inner Distribution Road (IDR) has overnight lane closures for bridge work between 9pm and 6am.
 - A4044 Cox Green Road closed for bridge repairs, with a diversion via Kimbers Lane, Spring Hill, Manor Lane, Shoppenhangers Road, Cox Green Road and Ockwells Road.
 - M20 junction 8; roadworks on A20 roundabout above the motorway with one lane closed.
 - M25 junctions 6-10; restrictions and lane closures between the Godstone and A3 junctions as widening work continues along the 19-mile stretch.
 - A29 Slinfold; temporary lights controlling traffic during the day on Hayes Lane for resurfacing work.
- SOUTH WEST**
 - M5 junctions 18-19; contraflow in operation with a 50mph speed limit in force for major roadworks between Avonmouth and Portbury. Expect lengthy delays, especially on Friday nights and Saturday mornings.
 - A417 Near Cirencester; various restrictions operating between just north of Stratton as roadworks continue.
 - A35 Totton Bypass; lane closures westbound near the Rusington roundabout for emergency gas repairs. Expect delays at peak periods.
 - A36 Bath; roadworks on Lower Bristol Road. Peak-time delays, especially in the evening.
 - A419 between Swindon and Cirencester; restrictions and speed limits in operation between Latton and Weavers Bridge.
- MIDLANDS & EAST ANGLIA**
 - A38 Derby; restrictions near the A564 junction.
 - A6 Lockington; contraflow in operation for bypass work from just north of M1 junction 24 to Sawley Island (B6540) with no right turn for southbound traffic into Donnington Lane.
 - A52 Grantham Lane; closures on the bridge over the A1 with temporary lights. Delays at peak periods.
 - A38 Burton; contraflow between Branston and Barton, with diversions.
 - A46 Kenilworth Bypass; major roadworks near the A429/B4115 roundabout with contraflow, speed restrictions and lane closures.
- NORTH**
 - A7 Carlisle; Scotland Road down to single lane both directions between Eterby Street and Briar Bank.
 - M6 junctions 28-30; lane closures between Layland and Blacow in both directions.
 - A6136 North of Catterick Bridge; temporary lights. Long peak-period delays.
 - A697 Powburn, Near Alnwick; road closed at junction with Woodward Road. Diversions.
 - A630 Wheatley, Doncaster; temporary lights. Long delays on Wheatley Hill Road.
- WALES**
 - A458 East of Dolymaen; temporary lights controlling traffic 24 hours.
 - A484 Rhydyfryn; restrictions at Dwyry-Y-Nant for improvement work.
 - A4051 Newport; lane closures on Malpas Road between the M4 interchange at junction 26 and the Woodlands roundabout as major reconstruction work continues, with overnight junction closures and diversions in operation.
 - A472 Pontypool; contraflow in operation between Pontymolle and the Haron roundabout for major roadworks. Expect lengthy delays, especially from the A4042.
 - A485 Glynneath Bank; traffic reduced to a single lane with a contraflow in operation as roadworks continue.
- SCOTLAND**
 - A92 Tey Road Bridge; one lane closed southbound for maintenance work to be carried out.
 - M8 junction 15; reduced to two lanes westbound as roadworks continue at the Townhead junction, with various restrictions.
 - A77 Giffnock; contraflow in operation on Fernieck Road between Berrymill Road and Orchard Drive.
 - M73 Junction 3; down to one lane at the Mullinsburn junction in both directions for roadworks.
 - A83 Perth; work on Glasgow Road. Various restrictions in operation. Delays at peak periods.
- NORTHERN IRELAND**
 - M1; carriageway restricted to two narrow lanes at the Saintfield roundabout with 50mph speed limit.
 - A2 Carrickfergus; restrictions in Lame Road at the Rawbrae Road junction.
 - A2; Ballyreagh Road reduced to a single lane between Portlewart and Portrush for resurfacing work.

Are you living in crash city?



There is no straightforward reason why Birmingham leads the accident tables, but Eagle Star believes that the city's many motorway connections could be an important factor

IT'S ALL AT THE AUTOJUMBLE

THE BEAULIEU Autojumble at the National Motor Museum this weekend is the largest event of its kind in Britain. Nearly 2,000 stalls will spread around the New Forest fields selling everything from back axles to back numbers of motoring magazines.

THE SALE is vital for anyone with a rare or classic car to maintain, and a feast of curiosity for other enthusiasts. Motorcycles are well represented and specialist stalls offer books, photographs and automotive art. Many repair and reproduction companies will also be there.

MANY of the specialist clubs have stands to meet their members and recruit new ones. The Motor Trades charity, BEN, will have a large stand of donated material, including bargains from motor dealers having a clear-out.

BUT IF things run true to form, the chances are that some of the private stallholders may not even know what they are selling. For this is the ultimate garage sale, when all those little bits and pieces, nuts, bolts, valves and grommets which fill the most-neglected shelves of workshops are spread out in the light for inspection.

THERE will also be an "Automaat" of complete vehicles for sale and a Christie's auction of both automobiles and automobiles. The vendors will come from across Europe and the buyers will include those from Australia and the United States.

THIS IS the 30th Autojumble, a word coined at Beaulieu, and to mark the occasion readers of Car 96 are offered £2 off the usual admission price if they use the coupon below.

For further information: National Motor Museum, Beaulieu, Hampshire. 01590 612345

Drivers living in Birmingham are twice as likely to be involved in a car accident than those from Southampton, according to a new report, writes Horvay Elton.

Quite why Birmingham is the most accident-prone city in Britain, while Southampton remains comparatively safe, is still puzzling the insurance company that carried out the survey. But it believes that good road layout and an absence of heavy congestion in Southampton could go some way towards explaining why so few of its drivers become involved in accidents. The size of the city also seems important, with Britain's four largest centres of population occupying four of the five most dangerous places.

The north-south divide seems not to matter when it comes to safe driving. Southampton, where only one in fifteen motorists is likely to suffer an accident in any year is followed at the top of the table by Belfast, Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Newcastle.

Eagle Star, Britain's second biggest motor insurance com-

Birmingham leads the danger list, while Southampton is safest

pany, with 1.5 million drivers on its books, carried out the survey by dividing the number of policy holders in each of 19 cities by the number of accidents they reported, then expressing the result as a percentage.

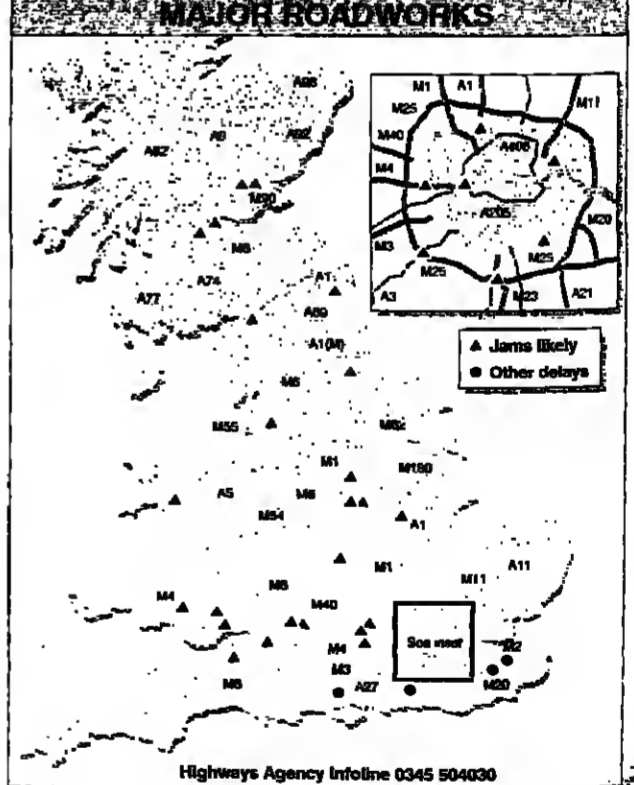
Because the vast majority of accidents take place within a few miles of home, the company says the survey is a fair reflection of the dangers in each place. It is likely that the overwhelming majority of claims came from motorists who had suffered accidents in their home cities.

"There does not seem to be any straightforward reason why driving in some of Britain's cities is safer in terms of accidents than others," said Graham Johnson, the company's divisional director. "It is likely that the combination of large volumes of traffic, road layouts and speed limits make some cities more hazardous for drivers than others."

According to the survey, 13.1 per cent of Birmingham driv-

ers (one in seven) had an accident last year compared with the one in fifteen from Southampton. In London the rate is one in nine (11 per cent) making the capital the third most hazardous city to drive in. Bradford has a slightly worse record (11.2 per cent) while Birmingham is adrift at the bottom of the table.

City	% Risk
Southampton	6.7
Belfast	6.8
Edinburgh	7.3
Aberdeen	7.5
Newcastle	7.7
Cardiff	7.8
Leicester	8.4
Brighton	8.7
Wolverhampton	8.9
Sheffield	8.9
Bristol	9.0
Liverpool	9.1
Leeds	9.1
Nottingham	9.3
Manchester	9.8
Glasgow	10.0
London	11.0
Bradford	11.2
Birmingham	13.1



NEWS IN BRIEF

Congestion relief

Vauxhall is the first manufacturer to start fitting the Trafficmaster information system, which gives a verbal warning of congestion ahead on Britain's motorways. The system, which monitors traffic flow through a network of 2,500 sensors sited on bridges and verges, will be fitted as standard in many Vectra models from next month. It broadcasts an instant warning when it detects traffic moving at less than 30mph. The system will be standard on GLS, SRI and CDX models and will be offered as a £95 option on LS models.

Goes like a shot

The world's first direct-injection petrol engine has gone on sale in Mitsubishi's new generation of Galant saloons and estates in Japan. The 1.8-litre unit will be available in similar models in Europe next year. Its power output is said to exceed that of the current 2-litre multi-point fuel-injected engine. Injecting fuel directly into the cylinder is said to combine the power advantages of a petrol engine with the economy of diesel. A 25 per cent fuel saving is claimed in urban conditions.

Terminally ill

A flat battery remains the most common cause of emergency call-outs to the Mondial Assistance organisation, which offers help to motorists throughout Europe and on four other continents. Battery problems accounted for 33 per cent of call-outs, followed by mechanical and electrical failures such as clutch problems. But a surprising 11 per cent of calls were due to

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Autojumble

Present this voucher when you pay for admission for the 1996 Beaulieu Autojumble. One ticket only per voucher. This offer cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer or discount. Admission includes entry to Autojumble, National Motor Museum.

AUTOFAX by Les Evans and David Long

THE 1934 HILMAN MINX MELODY WAS THE FIRST BRITISH CAR TO HAVE A RADIO FITTED AS STANDARD...

SWITZERLAND BANNED MOTOR RACING IN 1955 BUT STILL HAS HER OWN RACING COLOURS: RED WITH A WHITE STRIPE

THE BEAUTIFUL AND AERODYNAMIC FORD F3L NEEDED ONLY 200HP TO HIT 200MPH BUT FAILED TO FINISH A SINGLE RACE...

IN THE SIXTIES THE MET RAN A FLEET OF RAKISH DAMPER SP250S WITH AUTOMATIC GEARBOXES SO POLICE DRIVERS COULD KEEP BOTH HANDS ON THE WHEEL DURING HIGH-SPEED CHASES.

Handwritten signature or text at the bottom of the page.

The man responsible for RAF safety tells Stuart Birch why car driving is more dangerous than jet piloting



Supersonic jet-fighter pilot Air Commodore Rick Peacock-Edwards may cut a daredevil figure, but he is also Director of Flight Safety for the RAF — and this cautious approach is borne out by his choice of car and wary driving style

The RAF Tornado fighter pilot's voice came over the aeroplane's intercom: "We will be slowing now," he warned me.

"OK," I simply replied.

"We will also be rolling."

"Rolling?" My idea of rolling is when a car leans a few degrees through a tight corner. "You mean upside-down type rolling? But we're travelling at almost twice the speed of sound."

"Yes," the voice said.

So we slowed, rolled, climbed and turned, with the G-forces tugging and crushing the harness straps biting, before diving towards the North Sea, subsonic now, but shedding 20,000 ft in about 30 seconds, the airframe vibrating in mild protest.

Going to work with Air Commodore Rick Peacock-Edwards is an experience. While people strive for the sound barrier on land — Flight Lieutenant Andy Green, also a Tornado flyer, is to make the attempt later this year in Richard Noble's Thrust SSC — the Air Commodore has been thumping through it in the air for nearly 30 years. He spent 1,500 hours flying the old brute-force Lightning interceptor (just like a Formula One car — enormous power and wonderfully responsive), 1,000 hours in the Phantom (a real war machine) and another 2,500 in a variety of other fast jets. In 1990, he went to Saudi Arabia to establish the facilities that would enable the RAF to fight in the Gulf War.

Now, at the age of 51 years, the Air Commodore is still

When you fly combat, you drive pacifist

flying high, and still climbing way up the Mach numbers.

If it all sounds a dangerous way to earn a living, Peacock-Edwards would disagree; and he ought to know, for he is Director of Flight Safety for the RAF. "I believe it is safer than driving. People around me on the roads are not trained to drive their cars in the way RAF pilots are trained to fly," he says. "Many do not have an awareness of their environment, nor of changes to that environment — weather and road conditions."

"When I am driving, I am always thinking ahead and considering my options if a dangerous situation develops. You must always have an awareness of your escape action if necessary; it is an essential part of RAF pilot training."

He says he uses the rear-view mirror constantly when driving; something fighter pilots have done since the days of the Red Baron. "I want as much information as I can get all the time. But unfortunately most road vehicle drivers don't have the training we get."

Although we can't all be fighter pilots, some of the everyday caution that is part of flying could be adopted by motorists. Very few drivers check their cars in the morning as any self-respecting pilot should his or her aircraft. The Air Commodore says that even a small Cessna at the local flying club must undergo a series of checks before being flown. That includes looking for any hydraulic or fuel leaks, checking the oil level, ensuring the canopy/windscreen is clean and that the aircraft's entire structure and moving surfaces are functioning.

I also includes examining tyre and brake-line condition. The irony is that a Cessna will take off and land at about 65mph — a speed much lower than that at which many drivers habitually cruise on the motorway. Yet very few of us would make those thorough checks and examine the tyres at the start of each day, for much of the time we just presume and hope all is well.

Peacock-Edwards's job. "Re-

sponsibility for RAF policy on flight safety and post-crash management," makes him sharply aware of road safety, too. "I am particularly concerned about drivers travelling at high speeds much too close together. Human reaction times are such that coping with an emergency in those situations may be impossible. When forming a line, there may be only 10-20 feet between wingspans, but again we are trained for this."

But if safe gaps are left between vehicles on the motorway, someone invariably nips into them, which must annoy even a safety-conscious Air Commodore; after all, one of the vital elements for a fighter pilot's success is described as "controlled aggression".

Peacock-Edwards grins: "Of course, my initial reaction is to flash the headlights. I am very competitive, and as a fighter pilot I like to win: coming second in air combat is not to be recommended."

"But on the road," he adds, "I usually decide to move away from such situations because I do not want to be

near those drivers. Sometimes, though, my wife does give me some help in reaching that decision..."

There are, without doubt, strong parallels between flying safety and road safety, but clothing is not included. The well-dressed Tornado crew member wears a complex collection of apparel that gives a distinctly trussed up feeling. When he flies, Peacock-Edwards also wears chamois leather gloves. "They are for protection in the event of fire and to give me a better grip on the controls." Yet in the 1990s, string-backed driving gloves on a steering wheel are regarded as a joke, something for the anorak set or old codgers.

And the image of off-duty fighter pilots whizzing around in MGs does not quite fit the facts in Peacock-Edwards's case. He drives a Volvo 940S Estate 2-litre. In Latin, Volvo means "I roll", so perhaps there is a link with the Tornado's capabilities, but Peacock-Edwards's reason for choosing it was more prosaic. "We have three teenage children and it carries them and all the impediments that invariably go with them. It's my second Volvo; other cars have included a BMW, VW Passat, a Chevrolet, and a Dodge Caravan MPV. I dream of owning an E-type Jaguar; I have always wanted to drive that car."

But many people have wanted to fly — or even fly in — a jet fighter. Travelling at Mach 2 in the cosseted environment of Concorde is one thing, but doing it in a combat aircraft is something else altogether, although compared with the

VOLVO 940S ESTATE

Body style: Load-carrying five-seater, boxy but practical, a fixture of the school run in any suburb.

Engine: Four-cylinder, 1986cc, 111bhp.

Transmission: Five-speed manual.

Performance: 0-60mph, 13.2 seconds top speed 111mph.

Economy: 26mpg (average).

Equipment: Central locking with anti-theft alarm, driver airbag, three-point inertia-reel seatbelts front and rear, front seatbelt pre-tensioners, side impact protection system, ABS, high level rear brake light, headlamp wash/wipe, radio and tape cassette.

Insurance Group: 14.

Price: £18,190 (current model: 2.3 litre LPT Classic).

TORNADO

Model: Panavia Tornado Air Defence Variant (ADV).

Price: £20,000,000.

Engines: Twin-afterburner Turbo Union RB199 Mk.104 turbofans; maximum afterburning power more than 33,000lb static thrust.

Performance: 0-1,000 mph, secret, but your eyes may water.

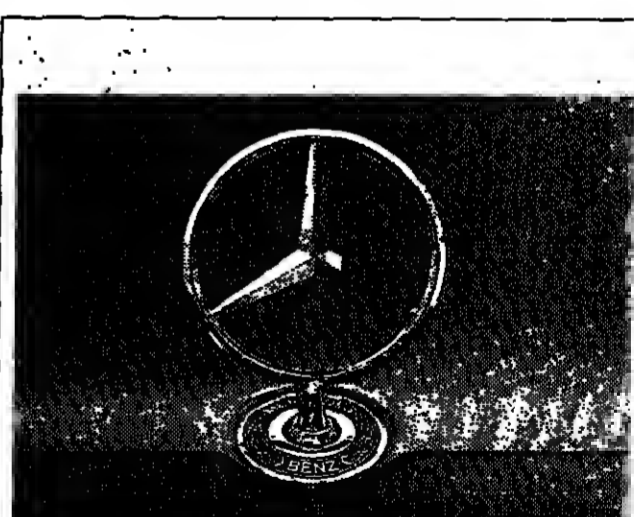
Top speed: more than twice the speed of sound.

Equipment: Four Skyflash medium-range and four Sidewinder short range missiles; 27mm Mauser cannon; Foxhunter air intercept radar with look-up, look-down, multiple target track-while-scan capability. Head-up display, twin inertial navigator, variable wing sweep. Radio and tape cassette.

likes of the Lightning and Phantom, the Tornado is very much more civilised. Its air-conditioned cockpit is roomy, with noise levels not much more than a medium-sized car at speed, but it still climbs, dives, twists and turns at low level with alacrity.

"If the Lightning, with its twin Rolls-Royce Avon engines, was akin to a Formula One car, the Tornado is like a very high performance Grand Tourer with great power and great competence."

As Director of Flight Safety, Peacock-Edwards may fly any aircraft type operated by the RAF; but lightning up the Tornado's afterburners and showing its twin throttle levers hard against their stops to power over the horizon is always guaranteed to give him a buzz.



If it's not a genuine Mercedes replacement part, it's not a genuine Mercedes.

When we build a Mercedes-Benz, we make sure that every single component is up to the high quality standards of the marque. And the only way to be sure your Mercedes remains a Mercedes is to have it serviced and repaired by an appointed Mercedes-Benz dealer, using genuine Mercedes replacement parts. After all, if you were interested in something cheaper but less well-made, you wouldn't have bought a Mercedes in the first place, would you?

That's why we say that no-one looks after your Mercedes-Benz like a Mercedes-Benz dealer.



Triker Light, it's unique

Known as Mrs Wobbly during lessons, Linda Light took 25 years to fulfil her ambition to ride a motorbike. Two weeks after passing her test, she was in intensive care after an accident.

But the 45-year-old mother of two from Stockwell, South West London, was determined not to be beaten and spent thousands of pounds having her bike "triked". Now Linda is the very proud owner of the only three-wheeled, anniversary-edition Honda Goldwing in Europe.

It was while her husband, Pete, was looking for a motorbike for their son five years ago that the Goldwing first caught Linda's eye. "Pete said he had seen what he called a 'blue monster' in a bike shop, but had no idea what it was. When I saw the bike for myself, I just fell in love with it," she says.

After shopping around, the couple bought bike number 29 of the 100 limited-edition 1991 Goldwings made for the British market.

"I never had any interest in driving a car and had not been on a motorbike since 1968," she says.

Jennai Cox meets a woman biker wild on three

band managed to coax me on to the back of the Goldwing," Linda says. "I just wanted to drive the second-hand monster."

She got her chance soon after at a charity event where a section of land was cordoned off for novice bike riders. "I loved it, so my husband bought me an intensive course of motorbike riding lessons for Christmas," Linda says.

At all of 5ft tall, Linda was known as Mrs Wobbly by her driving instructors at the centre in Wimbledon. "I was a bit unsteady, but I really wanted to succeed," she says. After four attempts she passed her test in May 1993.

Just two weeks later, when riding as a passenger with her husband, the marvellous blue monster skidded on diesel spilt by a lorry and went out

number of broken bones. The only way she would feel safe riding a bike again was on one with three wheels.

"We had talked about converting the Goldwing before, but getting the kit from Texas was so expensive," she says. The damage to Linda's confidence, not to mention that done to the Goldwing, gave them the excuse to spend the thousands of pounds needed to "trike" the bike. The 1520cc-engined, three-wheeled Honda is now worth £25,000 and is the only one of its kind in Europe.

She remembers: "Once I was fit enough, I went back to my old driving school and said, 'Right, now teach me how to ride this.' They all looked horrified." But by June last year, Linda was back on the road and has been riding happily ever since.

She became the first female member in her unit of the Goldwing Owner's Club and has encouraged other women to join. The bike has only one drawback.

"I often get stopped by the police, but they only want to chat about it

McLaren and Mercedes-Benz may revive a winning colour in their hunt for success, says Alan Copps

Return of the Silver Arrows

The Silver Arrows could be back in grand prix racing next year. That was the name given to the all-conquering Mercedes-Benz works teams in the 1930s and again in the 1950s, which appeared in the national racing colour of Germany. In those days even the name was enough to impress competitors, who still consisted largely

of private entrants or optimistic makers ill-equipped to match the Teutonic efficiency of the men from Stuttgart.

In these days of ruthless professionalism, huge television audiences and mega-sponsorship it is unlikely to have the same effect, but it does open a new era for McLaren, historically Britain's most successful grand prix team, which has been having a lean time despite relying on Mercedes engines.

McLaren was founded in 1966 by grand prix driver Bruce McLaren, but it was not until after his death, and a sponsorship partnership was signed with the cigarette mak-



Alain Prost in the glory days of Marlboro McLaren in the 1988 Australian Grand Prix

er Marlboro in 1973, that McLaren became consistent winners. The partnership with Marlboro, which has produced more grands prix wins than any other, is to finish at the end of this season when McLaren parts company with Marlboro after 23 years, 96 victories, nine drivers and a total of seven constructors' championships.

As Marlboro pours more money into Ferrari, McLaren has turned to the German tobacco company Reemtsma for a new £24-million five-year deal which will see the cars carrying the badge of the West cigarette brand.

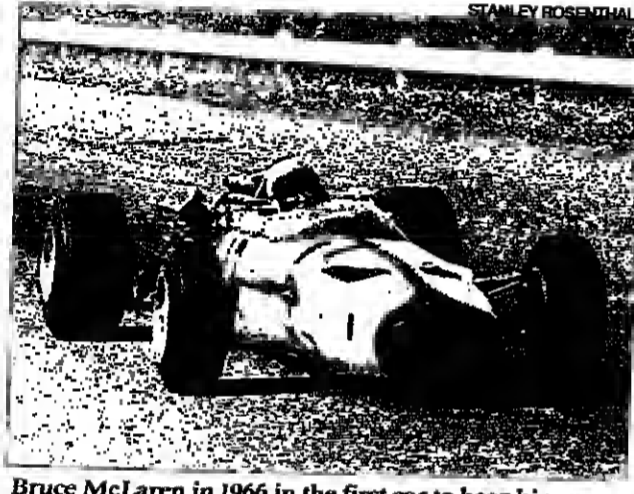
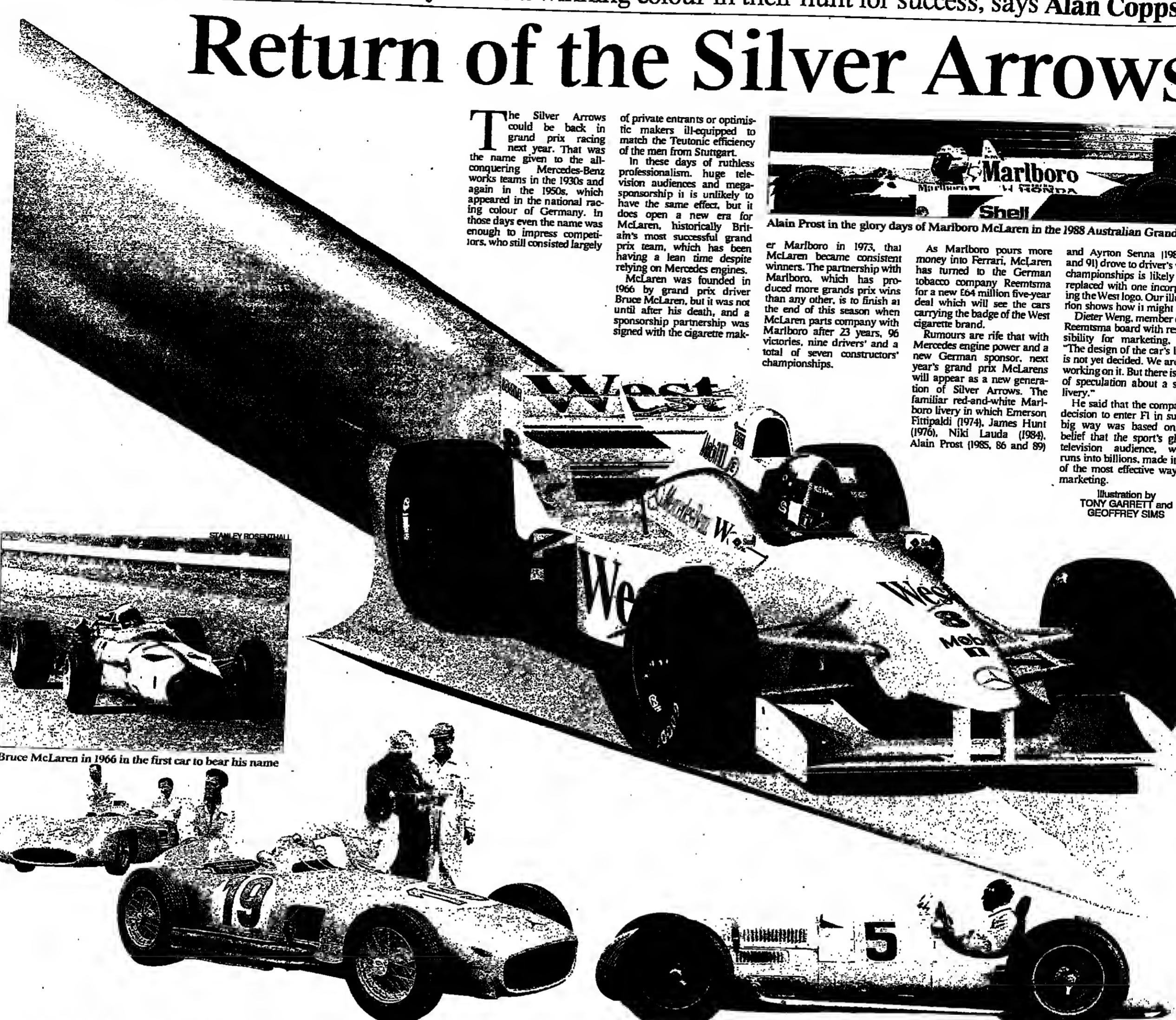
Rumours are rife that with Mercedes engine power and a new German sponsor, next year's grand prix McLaren will appear as a new generation of Silver Arrows. The familiar red-and-white Marlboro livery in which Emerson Fittipaldi (1974), James Hunt (1976), Niki Lauda (1984), Alain Prost (1985, 86 and 89)

and Ayrton Senna (1988, 90 and 91) drove to driver's world championships is likely to be replaced with one incorporating the West logo. Our illustration shows how it might look.

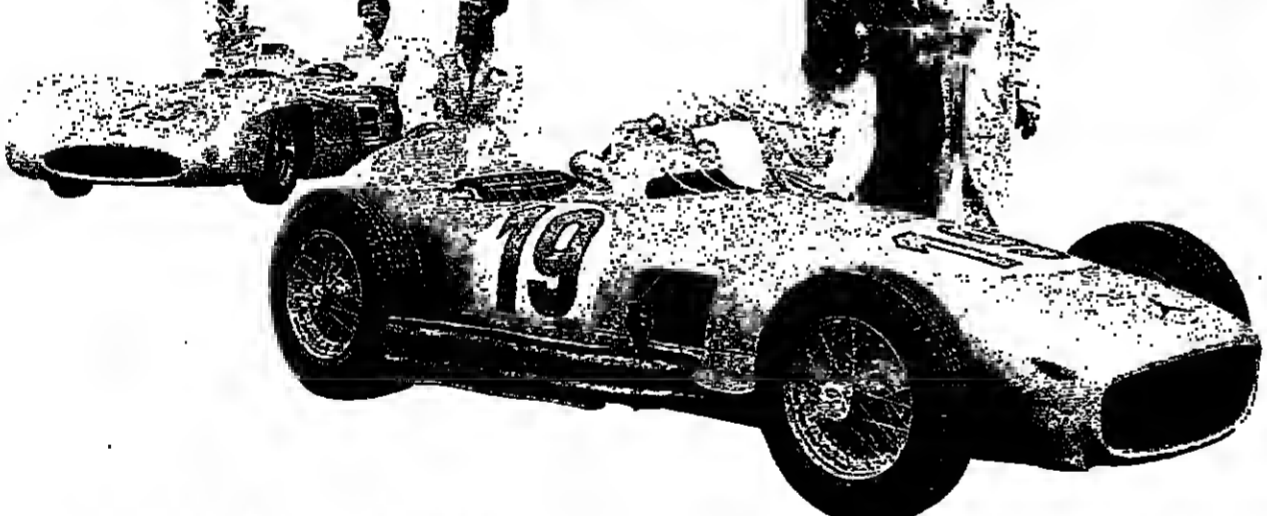
Dieter Weng, member of the Reemtsma board with responsibility for marketing, said: "The design of the car's livery is not yet decided. We are still working on it. But there is a lot of speculation about a silver livery."

He said that the company's decision to enter F1 in such a big way was based on the belief that the sport's global television audience, which runs into billions, made it one of the most effective ways of marketing.

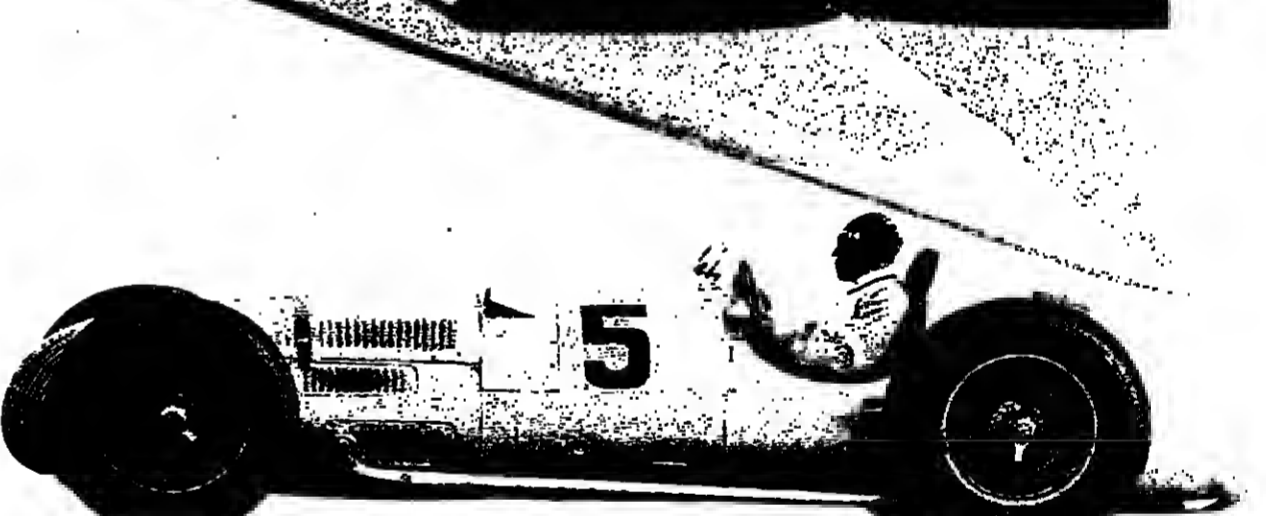
Illustration by TONY GARRETT and GEOFFREY SIMS



Bruce McLaren in 1966 in the first car to bear his name



Mercedes-Benz and Fangio dominated grand prix in the mid-1950s. The 1954 car above was driven by Karl Kling

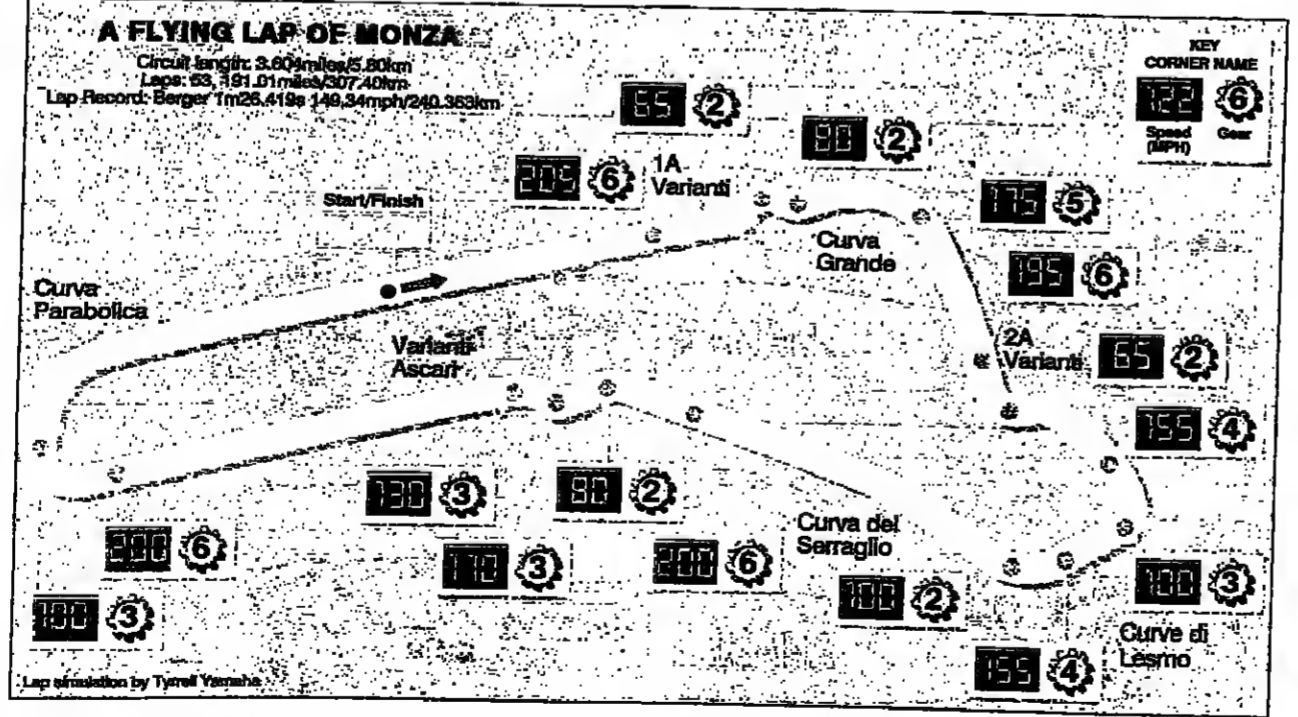


Walter Baumer driving the Mercedes-Benz W154 of 1938, which Hitler helped to finance to boost German morale

Why Williams divorced Damon



It is sad that just before Monza, as Damon Hill gets ever closer to winning the Formula One World Drivers' Championship, his finest hour has been tarnished by the news that his services are not required by Williams next year, his place being taken by Heinz-Harald Frentzen, who will drive alongside Jacques Villeneuve.



more in engineering than in drivers. But when a car-engine-driver partnership is successful, the parties usually have different views about their importance. Nigel Mansell left Williams as world Champion at the end of 1992 because the team thought his financial demands excessive. Ironically, it was just this circumstance that gave Damon Hill his break. Frank Williams and Patrick Head took a big chance and employed Damon on the basis of his sterling test-driving work. It was the start of four increasingly successful seasons as Damon worked hard to justify his position.

Win a day on the track worth £165

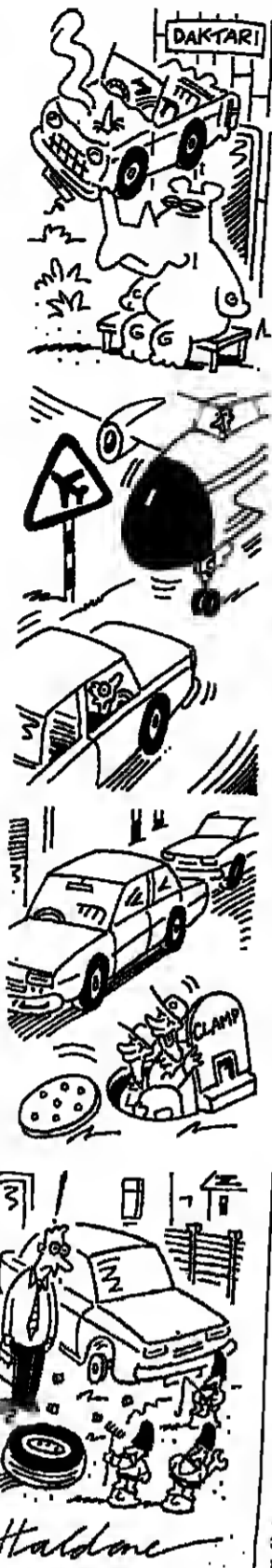
Today The Times, in association with Everyman Motor Racing at Mallow Park, offers readers the chance to test their driving skills with a prize worth £165. The winner can choose from a wide range of driving activities, including racing cars, rally cars, off-road cars, plus he or she can tackle a tank and military vehicles. Two runners-up receive a pair of tickets to any race meeting of their choice - and there are 40 to choose from - at Mallow Park, Leicestershire.

All you have to do to enter is call our competition hotline 0891-40 50 06 with your answer to the following question:

F1 FANTASY DRIVE LEADERBOARD AFTER 12 RACES. Table with columns for position, name, and score.

CHECK YOUR SCORE. Players can check the scores and positions of their teams by calling the hotline number below.

CAR... TOONS



Volkswagen's revamp turns motoring's Mr Worthy into a bigger, faster, markedly more dynamic contender, says Hugh Hunston

The Passat is passé no more

You need never ask how to get lost again



The new bodywork is much lighter and has a svelte street presence with an almost coupé-like roofline, even if its rear looks like the Vectra

Volkswagen is committed to spending at least £12 million to persuade the British motoring public, particularly fleet buyers, that the new Passat is no longer passé when it is released on to the market in December.

The scale of VW's UK ambitions is reflected by a planned quadrupling of sales to 32,000 cars next year and on to 40,000 during 1998. All for a model which VW head of marketing, John Abbot, admits has "a dull, worthy and uninspiring image".

Larger, safer, faster and markedly more dynamic than Passats that went before, the new upper-medium-sector contender draws heavily for technical inspiration on its Audi A4 cousin. It shares the basic platform and much of its engine and transmission with the Audi, including the fore-and-aft engine installation which replaces the former transverse format.

The new Passat is clothed in a galvanneal steel shell whose corrosion resistance earns it an 11-year anti-perforation guarantee. VW hopes it will sustain better residual values and gain elevated status among mainstream Ford Mondeos, Vauxhall Vectras and Peugeot 406s.

Robin Woolcock, head of VW in Britain, believes Passat's lacklustre image will be eliminated by "a quantum leap in all departments". He has no qualms about retaining the Passat name, even if a new title might have been an additional asset.

Initially the engine line-up will be restricted to an Audi-derived, aluminium 16-valve, 1.6-litre, 100bhp petrol unit, plus 90bhp and 100bhp versions of frugal, direct-injection, 1.9-litre turbo-diesel power plants.

In a phased programme from January until spring, VW will add three new petrol units using straight-four, V5 and V6 layouts. They all use light-alloy, multi-valve technology, ranging from a 1.8-litre, 20-valve, 125bhp version to the unique VR6 (150bhp) and the 30-valve, 193bhp V8 which will come with the Syncro four-wheel-drive system.

To cock a snook at its mass-market rivals, VW is offering an array of smart technology options, in addition to baseline ABS, twin airbags and immobiliser. Arguably the most useful extra is the route-finding satellite-guidance system, but for driving appeal, the five-speed Tiptronic automatic transmission seems the most

attractive gadget. It switches between stick-it-in-D-and-leave-it automatic mode, to a stick-shift control, using a sequential push-button lever for changing up and down the box.

British drivers and front-seat passengers will not get standard side airbags, testimony to the need to compete with established volume sellers on price and specification.

Larger than its predecessor, the series-five Passat is lighter, courtesy of a series of weight-saving measures. Use of magnesium (extracted from the Red Sea) saves 6.5kgs on the gearbox, plastic headlights are 1.5kgs lighter, tyres and wheels weigh in at 3.9kgs less, thinner glass means water weight, courtesy of a new fine-spray system. The accumulated weight loss is 40kgs or 88lbs on a car with a frame 30 per cent more rigid than the series-four Passat. The Passat has a much more svelte

VOLKSWAGEN PASSAT
Engines: Initially 1.6-litre (100bhp) 16-valve, four-cylinder petrol and 1.9-litre (90bhp and 100bhp) direct-injection, turbo-diesels matched to five-speed manual and choice of four-speed and five-speed automatics. By spring, 1.8-litre, 20-valve (125bhp) new VR6 (150bhp) and V6, 30-valve (193bhp) units with Syncro four-wheel-drive will be offered. Also Tiptronic or active-automatic gearbox for higher-performance variants. Performance: 1.6 litre, 0-62mph, 12.3 seconds; top speed, 110mph. Equivalent figures for V6 7.6, 148mph. Economy: 1.6: approx 40mpg overall. V6: 31mpg. Turbo diesel: approx 50mpg. Equipment: Standard specification includes twin airbags, front and rear belt pre-tensioners, ABS, engine immobiliser, RDS sound system, front electric windows. Prices: From £13,000 for 1.6 entry model to around £20,000 for V6 Syncro.

Despite investing more than £2 billion in the car's development, its Dresden press fleet conspicuously lacked VR6, V6 and Tiptronic versions. But a frustratingly congested drive in the 1.6-litre petrol and 110bhp diesel cars still demonstrated that

refinement is what the new Passat is all about. Courtesy of a longer wheelbase than A4, it has a longer and poise well beyond previous Passats, with a singular lack of wind noise on the short (sloped-off) area of autobahn covered. The gearchange and clutch action is also in a different league, and a sense of urgency up through the gears complements long-legged motorway cruising abilities.

Six-foot passengers can sit behind similarly sized drivers, even if rear headroom feels compromised compared with the predecessor. Passat production facilities include the Mosel factory in Saxony, an area which provided 25 per cent of pre-war German car output. Use of this site has helped VW to reduce unit costs.

Without this pricing asset, VW's UK market ambitions would be academic. They translate into raising the British Passat ratio to one-in-ten of Western European Passats sold, from the one-in-40 average during the car's 23-year history. Not an easy task, even for this quality act.

Marriages and relations ships come under severe strain when partners become embroiled in route-finding disputes in a car. But VW now has the high-technology equivalent of a route-finding Relate service.

British Passat buyers can opt for the in-car navigation aid for around £1,300 from next year when software holding digitalised street plans at the UK becomes available.

The information is held on a boot-mounted CD-Rom and triggers off the "pleasant female" voice's directions, along with dashboard-mounted arrows pointing the way for those who do not know their left from their right.

A radio aerial takes bearings from three satellites to let the car know where it is to within 30 metres, while this orientation is confirmed by a solid-state magnetic compass in the roof. The Passat's ABS sensors provide the sense of direction by which way the wheels are pointing.

First, you key in the destination town, using three or four-letter cues and a scroll-down index, then select the street, and to be more precise key in intersections. Then steer the car in the recommended direction, with advance warnings 300 metres before turnings.

An attempt to sabotage German efficiency by overshooting junctions or meandering up side roads failed, and on one occasion the arrow pointed accusingly back the way we had come like an admonishing finger.

Even local farm tracks were part of the map, although rural deviation will probably not be countenanced in the UK. Strategic information like local airports will also be stored with regular map updates available.

Mercedes-Benz advertisement listing various models and their prices. Models include C180 Elegance, E3000 EST, 420SE, 500SL, 500SL, 500SL, 300SL, 200TE, 220TE, and Waterfall. Each listing includes engine details, features, and contact information for authorized dealers.

Built to last a second lifetime.



Mercedes-Benz Used Cars

Large advertisement for Lancaster Mercedes-Benz dealership. It features the Lancaster logo, the slogan 'The largest retailer of Mercedes-Benz in the U.K.', and a grid of car models with their prices. Contact information for various branches is provided at the bottom.

Advertisement for Cypriani car dealership, listing various Mercedes-Benz models and their prices. Contact number: 01305 264494.

Advertisement for Puttocks car dealership, listing various Mercedes-Benz models and their prices. Contact number: 0181 983 4444.

Advertisement for Pentagon car dealership, listing various Mercedes-Benz models and their prices. Contact number: 0114 2753391.

Advertisement for Jacksons car dealership, listing various Mercedes-Benz models and their prices. Contact number: 01473 232232.

Advertisement for Rybrook and Geyfords car dealerships, listing various Mercedes-Benz models and their prices. Contact number: 01708 861321.

Ann Bryson, the comedian famed for her cheese adverts tells David Long why she loves to drive a boy's sportscar

Frisky Philly in a Porsche

STEERING COLUMN

With her friend and co-star Sara Crowe, the actress Ann Bryson will next month be coming to our screens in a new ITV sitcom called Sometime Never...



Bryson with pets: "On country roads, where of course I always conform to the speed limits, the Porsche is great at going round corners."

How did you first learn to drive? I had lessons with a driving school, nothing unusual, and then passed my test at the third attempt...

What was your first car? A Renault Six, that's the one which looks a bit like a big Renault Four and has a spongy ride like a 2CV...

What car do you drive now, and why? I have a Porsche 911 because it is fun and because girls are not supposed to have this sort of car...

What is your most hated car? Easy - the Austin Allegro. Ugly, slow, stupid, and what's the point?

Do you like driving? Yes I do, except where I live in London, where all driving is completely dull and boring...

What is your worst habit in the car? Throwing rubbish on the floor and smoking.

What infuriates you most about other drivers? Indecision, not just old people but young ones too...

What is the most unusual thing you have done in your car? Well, it is not what I have done, it is with whom I did it that makes it unusual...

Have you ever had points on your licence? Yes, but I do not have any on my licence now. I got the penalty points for speeding...

What do you listen to in your car? Mostly Virgin FM and sometimes Radio Four because the tape player in the 911 is almost as old as the car...

If you were Secretary of State for Transport, what is the first thing you would do? I would instigate an efficient form of local transport so that people, particularly young women, could feel safe travelling at night...

What is your favourite car advertisement? They spent much too much money making it, probably enough to make about three feature-length films...

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50 CARS FROM £15,000 TO £25,000

Table with columns: MODEL, PRICE, Aug-96 Sep-96, Chge. Lists various car models and their price changes, including Volvo 850 2.0 GLT Estate, Subaru Legacy 2.0 Estate, etc.

Prices rounded to simulate actual dealer (incourt) prices. CAP is a not-for-profit organization...

WOMEN are more likely to stay loyal to one make of car than men, according to research by HPI-Equifax...

REGISTRATION NUMBERS. Premier Plates. J1 KEL £1,000. 10 WES Offers around £5,000. Tel: 0973 463882.

REGISTRATION NO'S. CNDA MEMBERS. N.E. Numbers CNDA 0191 520 2200. Tel: 01638 327 220 or 0468 308 156.

2 GUS £10,000 ono. Tel: 01638 327 220 or 0468 308 156. TOP NUMBERS. AF 888 50 J SUE 76...

REGISTRATION NUMBERS. MARKET RESEARCH. K1 MMY £14,995. P15 OFT offers around £10,000.

LAID OF MY FATHERS. DVLA's Classic Collection Auction at St David's Hall, Cardiff. Tuesday 17th September 1996. 0800 60 30 90.

REGISTRATION TRANSFERS. OFFICE ADDRESS: 109 HIGH STREET SOUTH. 01582 477333. DIAL-A-FAX. 0336 411479.

REGISTRATION NO'S. CNDA MEMBERS. 3 GAL £4,250. P11 ULS Offers around £1,995.

NASH & NASH 01232 714780/894661. Address registrations to suit any year of vehicle.

RENAULT. ROVER. MINI COOPER. SMC ROVER. RENAULT CLIO 1.2 RL.

REGISTRATION NO'S. CNDA MEMBERS. REGISTRATION TRANSFERS. 01582 477333. GREAT VALUE £495.

Fine old ladies show their temper

Fine weather, beautiful cars, what could go wrong? Well, Tony Dawe will explain

MOTOR CITY COVENTRY
30th August to 1st September 1996

Jane threw a tantrum last Friday night. Not surprising really; she had been deprived at the last minute of first place in a historic parade and behaved in the only way a grand lady knows.

Jane is a Daimler, one of the oldest and finest on the road, but her place at the head of a cavalcade of Coventry-built cars, organised to celebrate the centenary of the British motor industry, had been usurped by a more original model.

Her response, to the shock and embarrassment of Peter Thompson, her owner, was to stop in her tracks. She could have chosen one of the quiet back streets of Coventry which were included in the 20-mile route but ground to a halt at busy traffic lights on the fringe of the city centre.

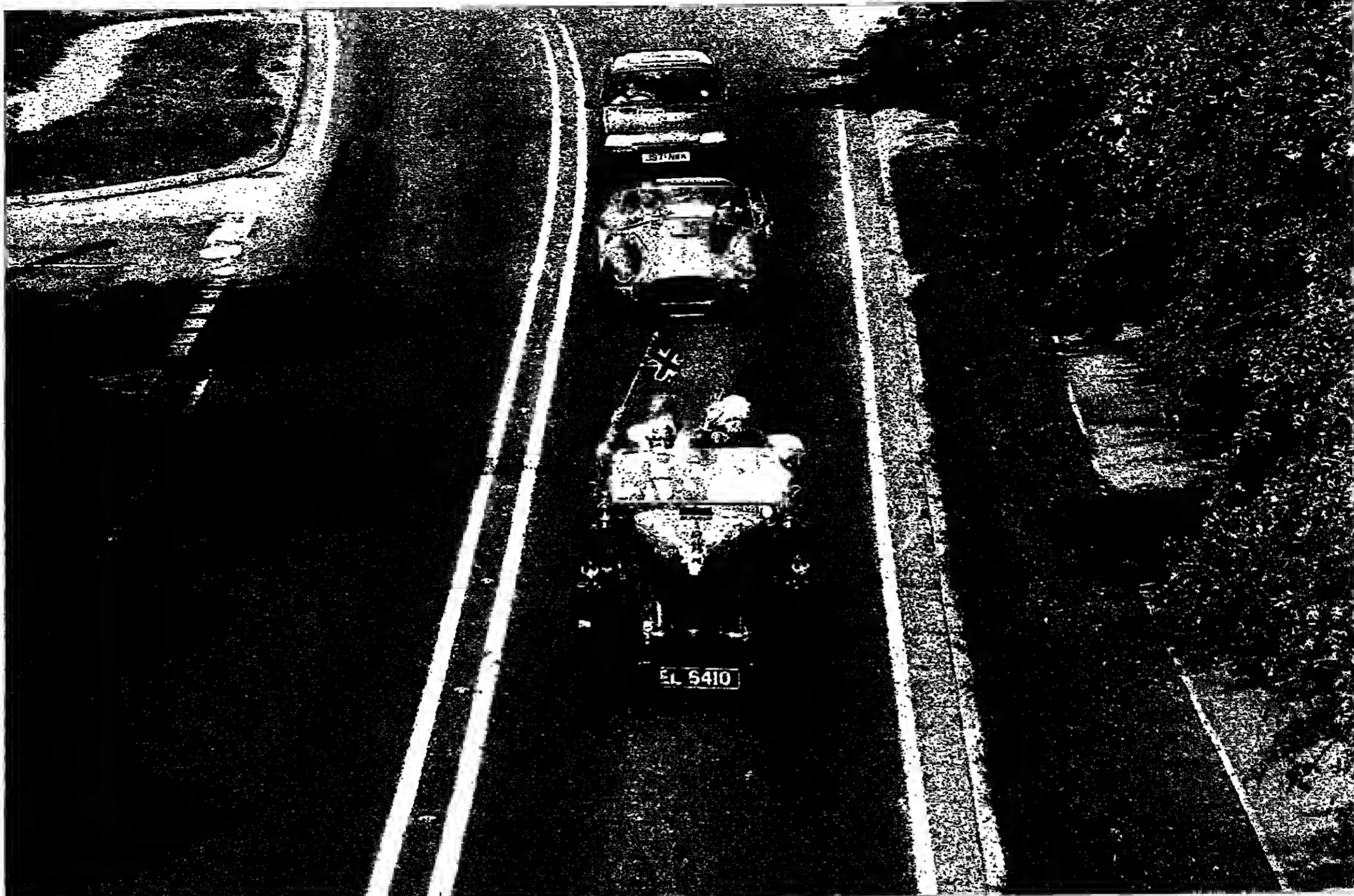
As Thompson removed the bonnet's side-panel, many of the following 150 cars in the parade squeezed past while onlookers gawped in amusement. Instant repairs were impossible so Mrs Thompson and I climbed down from our cart-like seats to push Jane into a nearby garage.

In fairness to the fine old lady, she was only one of several to misbehave during the three days of Motor in the City events. Unfortunately for me, I seemed to be with most of them.

The breakdowns, however, just added to the atmosphere of a memorable weekend which began with the Coventry Collection parade, continued with the Motor City Challenge driving skills competition and culminated on Sunday in the 65-mile Mayflower Coventry Shakespeare Run.

Fine weather brought out half the population of Warwickshire and the West Midlands to cheer on all the 470 historic participants.

Jane's behaviour could be excused. On the first-incline after parading through the city centre, the 1898 Daimler 6hp Wagonette which had claimed the number one spot slowed to a crawl forcing Thompson to brake. The eager driver of the following 1904 Siddleley failed to anticipate the problem and crunched up behind us. Luckily, the difference in size between the low-slung Siddleley and the car-like Daimler meant that the only damage was to Jane's



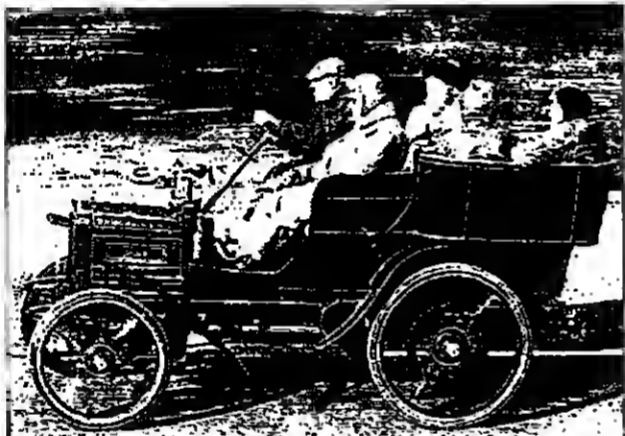
The crew of a Bullnose Cowley enjoy the fine weather during the Shakespeare Run. Crowds lined the parades and packed the centres of Coventry, Kenilworth, Stratford-upon-Avon and Leamington Spa

protruding rear lamp. She clearly regarded it, however, as yet another blow to her dignity.

The Siddleley was part of the romantic story of the night. The car was built by the company formed by John Siddleley, who later became managing director of Deasy and subsequently created the Siddleley-Deasy Motor Car company in 1912.

'I finally made it to the lunch stop, and retired'

Just before the parade began, members of the Siddleley and Deasy families met for the first time in more than 80 years. Lord Kenilworth, Siddleley's great grandson, was on hand to greet Rickard Deasy, 80-year-old son of Captain Henry Deasy, who had flown from Ireland specially. Appropriately, the two Daimlers and the Siddleley were followed in the parade by a 1910 Deasy bearing Siddleley's initials (JDS) and owned by Nigel Bradshaw of Lytham St Anne's, who gave up his seat in the car to allow



Jane, the ancient Daimler, before her unladylike upset

Rickard Deasy to savour his father's pride and joy. Elsewhere in the parade, more relatives were reunited with cars from their ancestors' companies, while retired carworkers met vehicles they had helped build years ago. Armstrong Siddleleys, Swifts and Sunbeams all cruised around the city with a rare Autovia, Calcott and Cluley. So what happened to Jane? Thompson discovered that her problems resulted from the stop-start nature of the parade:

she had used up more petrol than expected, run out and then developed an air lock.

A garage air pump and an ingenious mechanic from the Museum of British Road Transport, Coventry, helped ease her difficulties and we were able to beat some of the entrants back to the finish by taking a short cut.

If Jane had been petulant, the 1948 Jaguar Mark V that I collected on Saturday was a real bitch. She looked extremely elegant with her long black nose and graceful body but became bad tempered when treated impolitely.



Rover display team driver Russ Swift terrifies Car 96 journalists by using the borrowed Jaguars as goalposts



Another upset. This time Tony Dawe tries mopping up

between tank and carburettor. After a long rest, we finally made it to the lunch stop where I required buckets to drink and decided to retire. My poor performance and the failure to complete the remaining stages earned an impressive tally of 2,755 penalty points, rather more than the 38 scored by the winner.

On the Shakespeare run on Sunday, I waited until we were several miles into the route before telling Nigel Hugo, my host, about my record of misfortune. He was unperturbed, insisting that his 1911 Model T Ford open tourer would carry on regardless. "I was built for the wide open plains of the Midwest, so 65 miles in the Midlands won't cause any trouble," he said. He imported the car from the United States 15 years ago and has made a couple of modifications including the

introduction of a twin-speed axle to make it easier to drive.

The car behaved impeccably, as did almost all the 470 historic vehicles taking part including *The Times* Twenty entered by Car 96 readers.

Last to complete the circular route at 3.40pm was Stan Greenway, who had been first to leave at 10am, but he had the excuse of driving an 1899 Century Tandem Forecar. "It took all that time to do the trip and I didn't stop on the way," he said.

He admitted to being thirsty and stiff because the vehicle is steered by a tiller and must be held in gear to keep it moving. Every time he needs to work the compressor by hand, he has to wedge his thigh against the gear lever to prevent the car from stopping. He managed without a hitch, which is more than can be said for Jane, Bertha and me.

BEST ON TEST

Steve Howe amassed just 38 penalty points on 19 different driving skills tests to win the inaugural Motor City Challenge during the celebrations marking the centenary of the British motor industry last weekend.

The 34-year-old systems engineer from Leicestershire is no stranger to *Car 96* readers, for he has also won *The Times/Lease Plan Company* Car driver competition for the last two years and become an inveterate campaigner for safer driving.

Howe avoided penalty points on 13 of the 19 driving skills tests in his Ford Mondeo Si and struggled only with a speed regularity test and a manoeuvrability exercise. With his partner Bruce Elson he finished 11 points ahead of Phil Pickles and Duncan Crambe, leading an AA team in a Fiat Tempra, and James Thomas and Mal Friend in a Rover Metro.

The tests, which also featured speed and distance judgments and a written exam, were staged at nine centres in the Midlands, including the Peugeot Ryton plant, Jaguar Engineering Centre, Motor Industry Research Association proving ground and the National Motorcycle Museum.

Many entrants displayed very professional skills but prizes also went to novices, both old and young. A special award was presented by Alan

Copps, editor of *Car 96* which co-sponsored the event, to Alex Russell and Craig Jackson, two teenagers who had travelled from Lincolnshire to take part. They drove a borrowed Vauxhall Chevette and slept in tents because they could not afford to pay for hotel accommodation.

Corinne Davies also picked up an award for perseverance. Her 1965 Singer Gazelle had taken part last Friday night in the Coventry Collection parade of historic cars built in the city but she had been told that she would not enjoy the driving skills test in such a vehicle.

At a reception which followed the parade she challenged the organisers and met Malcolm Ashford, who agreed to be her navigator. She then took her place at the start at the National Grid Centre on Saturday morning, and finished with a creditable 362 penalty points.

The most spectacular skills of all were exhibited by Russ Swift, the stunt driver with the Rover display team, who stunned entrants and spectators alike with a daredevil high-speed show outside the Motorcity Museum.

For a climax, he terrified the Car 96 team, including 13-year-old James Dawe who rode with him, by turning his car on its side and driving on the edge of two tyres between our borrowed classic Jaguars.

AWARD WINNERS

OVERALL WINNER: Steve Howe, Mondeo Si
All-Female Crews: Julie Dowling and Yeadean Chambers, Toyota Celica
Disabled Drivers: Richard Evans, Vauxhall Cavalier
Team Award: AA Team of Samantha Baird, Phil Pickles and Simon Taylor in a Honda, Fiat Tempra and Peugeot 406
Classic Car Drivers: Paul Mansfield, Rover P4
Rover Drivers: James Thomas, Rover Metro
Peugeot Drivers: Colin Jones, Citroen ZX (Peugeot owns Citroen)
Drivers with unusual cars: A.J. Nichol, AF Sports
Special Awards to: Alex Russell and Craig Jackson, Corinne Davies and Malcolm Ashford, and Peter Mitchell (only solo entrant).

EXCLUSIVE READERS OFFER

MOTOR CENTENARY SWEATSHIRT £17.99 inc p&p



1996 is Motor Centenary Year, celebrating 100 years of the car in the United Kingdom. To commemorate these celebrations Car 96, in association with the organisers of Motor in the City, are offering *The Times* readers the opportunity to purchase this exclusively designed sweatshirt.

Twelve famous and memory-evoking marques spanning 100 years, all manufactured in Coventry, have been brought together in one design.

The sweatshirts are 80% cotton and 20% polyester, available in a choice of white or ash grey and come in extra large only. To order your exclusive sweatshirt at £17.99 including postage and packaging, complete the coupon below or telephone our order hotline.

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REGISTRATION NO'S. C.N.D.A. MEMBERS

Midland House advertisement featuring a large 'midland' logo, contact number 0121 353 3333, and a detailed list of car models and prices. Includes a section for 'The Most Affordable And Quickest Way To Obtain Your Own Personalised Registration' with 'B6 MAC' and 'BARGAIN BASEMENT'.

VOLVO advertisement for a 850 GLT car, listing specifications and contact information.

VOLVO OWNERS advertisement for comprehensive insurance, offering a quote of £120 from £120.

ELAN advertisement for a 90 cc car, listing features and contact details.

ELAN advertisement for a 1100 cc car, listing features and contact details.

TOYOTA advertisement for a Land Cruiser VX 4.2 TD, listing specifications and price.

TOYOTA advertisement for a Land Cruiser VX 4.2 TD, listing specifications and price.

ELAN advertisement for a 90 cc car, listing features and contact details.

ELAN advertisement for a 1100 cc car, listing features and contact details.

ROLLS-ROYCE & BENTLEY advertisement for a Shadow 1974 model, listing features and price.

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SHADOW advertisement for a 1981 model, listing features and price.

SHADOW advertisement for a 1974 model, listing features and price.

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SHADOW advertisement for a 1974 model, listing features and price.

SHADOW advertisement for a 1981 model, listing features and price.

SHADOW advertisement for a 1974 model, listing features and price.

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SHADOW advertisement for a 1974 model, listing features and price.

ROVER advertisement for a Saab 900S 2.3i, listing features and price.

SAAB advertisement for a 900 Turbo 16S, listing features and price.

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VOLVO advertisement for a Volvo 460, listing features and price.

TOYOTA advertisement for a Toyota Corolla GTi, listing features and price.

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ROLLS-ROYCE & BENTLEY advertisement for a Rolls-Royce Phantom, listing features and price.

ROLLS-ROYCE & BENTLEY advertisement for a Rolls-Royce Phantom, listing features and price.

run ready GO advertisement for contract hire cars, listing various models and prices.

SAAB advertisement for a Saab 900 CSE, listing features and price.

VOLKSWAGEN advertisement for a Volkswagen Passat Estate, listing features and price.

VAUXHALL advertisement for a Vauxhall Astra, listing features and price.

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TOYOTA advertisement for a Toyota Camry, listing features and price.

ROLLS-ROYCE & BENTLEY advertisement for a Rolls-Royce Phantom, listing features and price.

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VOLVO advertisement for a Volvo 460, listing features and price.

WHO advertisement for Toyo tires, featuring a large 'WHO' logo and text: 'is one of the biggest makers of quality tyres you've never heard of?'. Includes a Toyo tire image and contact information.



Sandy Bisp witnesses the high-technology fight against car-crime on a London airborne police sortie

Sky patrol with the chopper coppers

The driver of a stolen car hurtles through a red traffic light at 70mph, apparently quite sure the police vehicle behind him won't follow. But the thief hasn't reckoned on a flying Squirrel, equipped with a tracker device, travelling at almost twice his speed, overhead. The chase is effectively over.

Sky patrols entered a new era this year when the Metropolitan Police Air Support Unit took delivery of a third Aérospatiale AS355N Twin Squirrel helicopter costing £1.9 million. After 15 years of operational policing over London, the Squirrel's predecessors, three trusty Bell 222s, have been honourably retired. Ideal when the Met was the first police authority in the country to deploy its own helicopters, the bigger, faster Bells often flew to the aid of other forces. But since many of these began teaming up to provide air support — as indeed the Met itself has done, linking up with Surrey Police — the Squirrels became a logical next choice.

More manoeuvrable for inner-city use, quieter and offering greater visibility in addition to being easier and cheaper to run and maintain, the Squirrels carry the newest day and night-observation technology in the form of state-of-the-art video and thermal imaging equipment.

Since the only way to see it all work is to go up, I joined a three-strong crew for a night shift. The first surprise, after sprinting to a "crew to aircraft" command at the Essex base (there is another in Surrey) was the minimal time required to become airborne with, theoretically, just 37 seconds between start-up and launch. It was a clear cold night (making London look wondrous) and my nine stones had a negligible effect on fuel and performance. The Squirrel got to where it was needed fast, doing two miles a minute at around 1,000 feet over that river of light, the M25 in full rush-hour flood. "Just look at that traffic..." whistled a crew member over the intercom.



One of the Metropolitan Police's new £1.9 million Squirrel helicopters. Each carries the newest day and night-observation technology in the form of state-of-the-art video and thermal imaging equipment

But our first task in north London — following the sighting of a wanted suspect — required us to hover and contain an area of undergrowth until ground police arrived with dogs. And so we did, orbiting to the right until

our flight controller cut through the plethora of radio communications: "Got a little job for you..."

"We've just been called on Channel 3. Is it the same one?" asks PC Dave Harriott, seconded by Surrey police as one

of two observers on board. "Observers' roles depend on where they sit," he explains. "The front one assists the pilot, navigates to the job and operates camera equipment. The one in the back keeps a log of action and talks to police on

the ground. To even up, we'll swap places — the one at the back has less to do." That night, although he got to operate the aircraft's 30-million candle-power "night-sun" searchlight, its "shy-sun" loudhailers stayed mute. Over the intercom, the pilot, seeking a landmark, asks: "Where's Wandsworth nick?"

"On our tail, on our tail," responds the Met's PC Terry White, the front observer in charge of camera and imaging equipment housed in a dual pod as compact as a portable television, suspended beneath the nose. Able to rotate through 360 degrees, with broadcast colour capability and a 32x zoom lens for long-range day surveillance, the equipment packed into this pod is impressive. It makes the identification of individuals and vehicle plates possible from between 350 and 600

metres. A live video link to New Scotland Yard means controllers there can direct helicopter operations from the ground if needed.

Searching for suspects is air support's bread and butter, whether or not incidents are traffic-related. But when chases occur above labyrinthine streets or alleyways on inner-city housing estates where patrol cars can't follow, the Squirrel is invaluable. The night before I flew saw two car chases within a minute of each other. One driver, not speeding but refusing to stop, was tracked by the Squirrel to a position where a patrol car was able to lay a stinger, a device to puncture tyres safely and ambush the vehicle. In the

other chase, as four occupants of a stolen car scattered, three arrests were made by police with dogs while the fourth was down to the Squirrel's thermal imaging equipment.

What may not be realised is that any police officer — even the lowliest on the beat — can request air assistance without recourse to higher authority or fear of reprisal. In fact, the Met and Surrey police actively proselytise via talks illustrated with the video compilations of operational film, encouraging their officers to use air support. "It's budgeted for and every division contributes, so use it," is the rationale. Figures prove the worth of air policing in two eight-hour

shifts, seven days a week, with a call-out crew on stand-by. For the 12 months ending December 1995, the Met and Surrey's air support unit flew 2,660 hours and dealt with 6,150 tasks, involving 720 arrests. Of these, 50 per cent were directly attributed to aircraft specialist equipment and trained police observers. Taking into account searches for missing persons as well as escapes from police or prison, an estimated 3,844 police staff hours were saved.

But no helicopter is perfect and even the Squirrel can appear overkeen. The night I went up, as well as suspects on camera we caught foxes, bunnies, compost heaps... even a dying barbecue, after "talking" a policeman on the ground to a spot indicated by the thermal imager. It was just a shame he had to scale a 12ft wall to reach the embers.

A 32x zoom lens can ID a car at 600 metres

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WHICH?

Simon Hacker joins the ram-raid busting Bristol patrol

Heat is on the chase

Inspector Chris Ware, the head of Avon and Somerset's new Air Support unit, says Bristol once suffered from six or seven ram-raids a night, but since his Aérospatiale Twin Squirrel went into action the figure has come down to one or two a month.

"After a year of operation, we have made 174 arrests of car criminals directly from the use of the helicopter. Our team can't claim all the credit, but it's a vital part of the broader-impact scheme against car crime. Time and again, we find that the Squirrel is doing a job without even leaving the ground — once the thieves know that we're onto them, their priority is to get away from the car. If they wait until we see it, there's nowhere for them to drive, and nowhere for them to run."

Tucked away inside British Aerospace's Filton complex, the Western Counties Air Operation Unit offers supreme proof that information is power. The station works autonomously as a listening post, scanning the airwaves and savedropping on the bobby on the beat, as well as picking up information from moles in the car-crime world.

When the alert goes out a team can be off the tarmac and a mile away over the city centre within 90 seconds. Guided by a professional pilot, a convenient observation point is chosen, and the real work begins. Perched up here, the image of police detection work takes on a futuristic edge. The thermal imaging camera strapped to the chopper's belly picks out the cars with



Even on the ground, the Squirrel can deter criminals

stolen BMW tearing out of the city and heading for the M4 is tracked. Through the gyro-stabilised camera, the heat from the BMW's tyres leaves a trail like melting liquorice along the outside lane. The sergeant reckons on 95mph to 100mph: all the while the video unit is switched to "record" for evidence.

As a tool for catching thieves, the chopper works with clinical efficiency. Trailing just a few feet above the stolen car, the 30-million-candlepower spotlight lights the surrounding area to football-stadium standards. If the pilot flies too close, the light is capable of singeing the paint off the car's roof. Should the thief escape on foot into the dark, the thermal camera enables the operator to guide officers on the ground to

All this efficiency has not been without reaction from the criminals. The cheekiest among them drive their black-windowed XR2s and SRIs up to the security fence at Filton, to do a spot of monitoring for themselves. The unit is wary of attack: Merseyside's unit suffered a dawn visit with a petrol can and an axe.

Beyond the buoyant humour and camaraderie of the flight crew, everyone is aware that the chopper is primarily there to cut down fatalities. Two years ago, a Bristol postman was knocked down and killed by joyriders; no one needs to compile lists to argue the case for this alternative to ground-based chases. As Inspector Ware explains: "Before we had the helicopter, we often had to pull back from confronting a stolen car — the dangers were just too great to

Are sky patrols worth it?

Q I know car crime is now widespread, but does it really pay to spend taxpayers' money on helicopters?

A Car crime is the largest category of crime in many parts of the country. Even if you are not affected it will put up your insurance.

Q But I thought that car crime was meant to be declining?

A It is overall, but the Government's continuing "Hyena" campaign urging vigilance.

Q Where are the best and the worst of the British car-crime areas?

A Cleveland, Greater Manchester, West Yorkshire and the West Midlands are bad. The safest areas are Dyfed-Powys, Suffolk, Wiltshire and North Wales.

Q And London...?

A Smashing a car window to steal a Rolex watch sounds bad to me.

A It shows how villains keep changing tactics. The lesson is to be vigilant and keep valuables out of sight. Car crime in London is below average: maybe it's those helicopters.

Handwritten signature or scribble at the bottom of the page.

BOOKS

Zen and the art of the chuckle

Michael Dibdin's gloomy detective has discovered a sense of fun in an almost Wodehousian plot, Marcel Berlins says

■ COSI FAN TUTTE By Michael Dibdin Faber, £14.99 ISBN 0 571 17920 7

transferring their affections — is almost Wodehousian in its absurd complexity and unbelievable but joyful ramifications.

Reality intrudes by way of a "clean-up the city" campaign that does not quite follow the intentions of the slogan. Some of the more seriously corrupt citizens of Naples are literally being scooped up into the innards of the garbage trucks that prowled at dawn. Zen's reluctant investigation

of these dirty crimes blends seamlessly into the farcical machinations that dominate the book.

The superior wit of Dibdin's novel is not limited to Zen's antics. As the opera-loving reader will already have suspected, it is no accident that the book bears the title of Mozart's Naples-set opera. Even the chapter headings are apposite quotes from the songs; and the plot unfolds in delightfully operatic fashion. You do not need to have heard the fat lady sing to appreciate Dibdin's homage, but enjoyment is enhanced.

Perhaps the book is a touch self-indulgently clever; but all is forgiven when the resultant virtuosity provides such great pleasure.



Dibdin: Neapolitan operatics



Patterns in complexity: computer-generated fish

■ FRONTIERS IN COMPLEXITY By Peter Coveny and Roger Highfield Faber, £9.99 ISBN 0 571 17922 3

THE 19th-century French physicist Pierre Simon Laplace saw the cosmos as a huge mechanical system which obeyed the strict physical laws of motion. All manner was caught in the embrace of these mathematical laws and they dictated the behaviour of the planets and the smallest atoms. This concept of the cosmos as a deterministic machine governed by unbending laws has influenced science until very recently. Now scientists are moving away from these reductionist theories and adopting a more holistic and complex approach towards understanding the structure of the physical world. Coveny and Highfield define complexity as "the study

of the behaviour of macroscopic collections of such units that are endowed with the potential to evolve in time". The key word is collections: just as a "van Gogh painting is so much more than a collection of bold brushstrokes", so the analysis of patterns in interacting physical phenomena results in a much broader picture of the universe than the old reductionist theories previously afforded us. "A swirling vortex in a turbulent ocean cannot be expressed in terms of individual water molecules any more than a happy thought can be depicted in terms of events within a single brain cell."

From the behaviour of computer-generated fish to describing patterns in economies, Coveny's and Highfield's book provides a comprehensive analysis of a science for the 21st century.



big as life

■ BIG AS LIFE By Rand Richards Cooper Bloomsbury, £6.99 ISBN 0 7475 2737 7

THESE wry, tender stories are about rites of passage, the small but significant events that become turning points in people's lives. A ten-year-old comes through his first summer camp and wonders how he can signal to his parents how much he has grown up; a father is almost caught out in an innocent deception aimed at impressing his son and suddenly sees their relationship in a new perspective. The central characters are American men but the women in these stories are equally well observed. Cooper's writing is neither new-mannish nor bluey, and has an enjoyable, Salinger-style humour.

■ PUBLIC LIVES By Melissa Benn Penguin, £5.99 ISBN 0 14 024401 8

KAREN NORTH enters the lives of the Martin family one rainy morning, quickly entrancing young Sarah Martin. Apparently they share the same birthday. But Karen once read about a person who used to pretend to share her birthday with someone she especially wanted to get to know. And talkative Sarah will tell her anything. But Karen disappears as quickly as she came. Meeting years later, Sarah plots revenge.

■ GOODNESS HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH IT By Mae West Virago, £7.99 ISBN 1 86049 034 4

WEST on the page is not quite as hot as West on screen, where we can best appreciate what one New York critic called her "deconstructing charms". Some thought her ribald to the point of obscenity but she followed as he completed the high traverse of the Eastern Transylvanian Alps. Perhaps that was because such mind-blowing weeks were by now commonplace to the man who was walking 10,000 km along the backbone of Europe from where the earth ended, Cape Finisterre, to Istanbul, the gateway to Asia: a walk that



A lost world: the Sucevita monastery in Romania, with its painted church — "like a treasure casket in its bucolic glen"

These boots were made for walking

THE man is formidable: on the day that I met him, deep in the heart of Romania, Nick Crane had scrambled down 2,000 steep metres and then marched 55km. In the days that followed, days that included a wondrous night under a full moon camped beside a spring high in the Cindrel mountains eating a spaghetti bolognese that has never been equalled by any restaurant, and washing it down with a single malt, he did not dwell on the storm, fierce enough to knock a man down, that had just lasted for 72 hours. Nor on the three hungry days that had followed as he completed the high traverse of the Eastern Transylvanian Alps.

Perhaps that was because such mind-blowing weeks were by now commonplace to the man who was walking 10,000 km along the backbone of Europe from where the earth ended, Cape Finisterre, to Istanbul, the gateway to Asia: a walk that

■ CLEAR WATERS RISING By Nicholas Crane Viking, £18 ISBN 0 670 86839 6

was planned to take a year but instead filled two long summers and one winter: a walk undertaken just one year after Crane had married another formidable traveller, Annabel Huxley. Why? Because, as R. L. Stevenson wrote in *Travels with a Donkey*: "I travel for travel's sake". But Stevenson, one of the greatest travel writers of all time, also added: "And to write about it afterwards". That was Crane's intention and he has now completed his masterpiece, *Clear Waters Rising*, subtitled with mastery understatement "a mountain walk across Europe". It is a book that must surely lift him into that rare category inhabited by Stevenson, Wilfred Thesiger, Peter Flem-

ing, Sir Fitzroy Maclean, Eric Newby and Crane's own hero Patrick Leigh Fermor. It is quite simply a great book about a great walk, a book with the capacity to make me laugh aloud and cringe with pain, such as the time when he applied surgery, with a Swiss Army knife, to a frostbitten toe while making a Christmas ascent of Mont Blanc: "I pierced the edge of the black area, then pushed in the knife and lifted the blade, like opening an olive ... the side of the toe fell off on the towel, then rolled to the floor with a tick."

But I laughed more often, and was made to indulge, pleasurably, in what Crane calls "that underrated leisure activity, thinking". I envy him the experience. I thank God that I did not have to live and walk through it. I revel in the telling of his tale.

CHRISTOPHER BRASHER

When the Bear gets grisly

ONE of the perpetual feishes of the thriller genre is the idea that a book benefits by being ephemeral. In the received wisdom, topicality sells.

Frederick Forsyth's *Icon* has aimed for topicality in the potential for chaos in post-Yeltsin Russia. Several of his characters are thumbnail sketches of real people, from Max Hastings, a former editor of *The Daily Telegraph*, here restored to his position in the guise of Brian Worthing, to a neo-Fascist Russian nationalist politician modelled on Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, though supposedly his successor.

This new Russian messiah, Igor Komarov, is a would-be Slav Hitler whose equivalent of *Mein Kampf* — complete with predictable plans for reconquest of the Soviet empire and concentration camps for Jews — manages to find its way into the British embassy. The hero, however, in a book clearly written for the American market, is a CIA man.

Jason Monk is one of Langley's top spooks, departed in disillusion after seeing his agents executed as a result of CIA traitor Aldrich Ames's betrayals. But the former KGB man who had them killed is now chief of staff to Komarov. Monk is ready to return to the fray to exact revenge and scupper Komarov's presidential ambitions. And that is it really, except that Forsyth throws in the bizarre idea that a solution to Russia's ills would be to have a minor member of the House of Windsor on the throne. *Icon* is a fast-moving tale with a satisfactory set-piece climax. There are some good lines, my favourite being the description of the Rossiya hotel as "about as big as Alcatraz but without the comforts". But it is marred by a

■ ICON By Frederick Forsyth Bantam, £16.99 ISBN 0 593 02801 5

few sloppy mistakes: East German marks were no good to anyone in September 1990. They were withdrawn three months before reunification. More worrying though is the moral message Forsyth seems to be espousing. The motive force on the eve of the new millennium is an ageing cabal of the retired great and good in alliance with a few all-enabling plutocrats. Monk's monkey business is carried



Forsyth: a worrying moral

out with the blessing of Margaret Thatcher, Henry Kissinger, Lord Carrington, George Bush, Colin Powell and James Baker — to name a few — but no elected politician. True, these fading luminaries are acting for the best, but what *Icon* applauds is the triumph of a self-satisfied small group of people convinced that they know best over the wishes — however wrong-headed — of a democratic majority. Ironically, it was the Russians who invented a word for it: bolshevism.

PETER MILLAR



STEPHEN FAY THE COLLAPSE OF BARINGS

■ COMING OF AGE WITH ELEPHANTS By Joyce Poole Hodder & Stoughton, £7.99 ISBN 0 340 06559 0

JOYCE POOLE was born in Africa and this remarkable book is a vivid testament to the hold that continent's horizons have on the European imagination. Poole has devoted her life to researching the lives of elephants in Kenya. For 14 years, she has lived in the bush under an unforgiving African sun and her studies have produced vital insights into the complex family structures of the world's largest land animal. Elephants are the chief protagonists in this book but the humans who are driven to live among them are no less fascinating a species.

■ THE COLLAPSE OF BARINGS By Stephen Fay Arrow, £6.99 ISBN 0 09 918242 4

IN FEBRUARY 1995 Barings collapsed owing £869 million. At first sight this was due to fraud by a trader in its Singapore office, Nick Leeson. Stephen Fay, former-deputy editor of the *Independent* on *Sunday*, has used his contacts in the financial world to investigate the story. He concludes that it was the combination of electronic banking and Barings' unique culture of British complacency that allowed Leeson to put the mechanics of his deception in place and the Bank of England's inadequate supervision that let it continue.

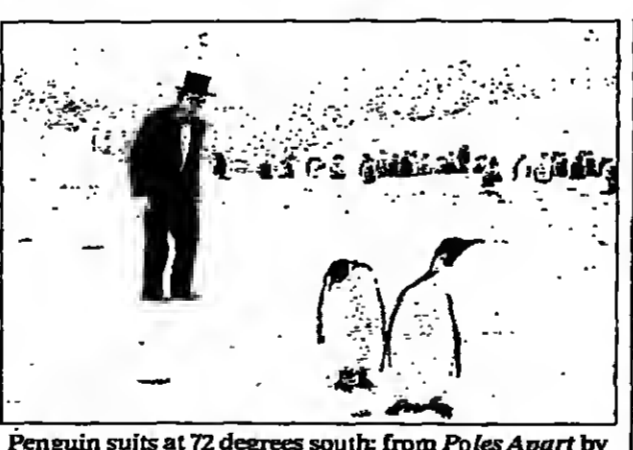
Contributors: Perry Cleveland-Peck, Hazel Leslie, Amanda Louise, Alison Burns, Lucy Lethbridge, Fiona Hook

South into the deep freeze

"AT THE bottom of this planet," wrote Admiral Byrd, the first man ever to fly over the South Pole, "is an enchanted continent ... pale like a sleeping princess." Antarctica is the coldest, windiest, most lifeless landmass in our world, yet it is also the most enigmatic and mysterious.

It is into this land of superlatives that Sara Wheeler slides in *Terra Incognita*, an account of her seven months spent journeying across the ice-sheet in an attempt to unlock some of its austere secrets. "We all have our own White South," wrote Ernest Shackleton, one of Antarctica's earliest explorers. For Wheeler as for him, the continent is a metaphor as well as the most daunting challenge an adventurer can face.

Wheeler's travelogue is sharp with observation. Her descriptions of bloodless icefields and wind-skittering crystals, of the ancient ululant songs of seals and the aquamarine opacity of jagged bergs, freeze-frame fragments of a landscape which seems by its nature too great for the imagination to comprehend. Alert to the heroism of an earlier age, Wheeler weaves the myths and histories of past



Penguin suits at 72 degrees south: from *Poles Apart* by Galen Rowell (Mitchell Beazley, £25, ISBN 1 85732 755 1)

■ TERRA INCOGNITA: Travels in Antarctica By Sara Wheeler Jonathan Cape, £16.99 ISBN 0 224 04184 3

exploration into her account. The epic feats of Robert Falcon Scott and Ernest Shackleton, of Douglas Mawson and Roald Amundsen are set alongside those of a more modern social order. Frozen-bearded hydrologists, glaciologists and seismologists stalk the realms where huskies once panted over a mapless land and gaunt men died of cold and hunger in snowbound huts.

In many ways Wheeler's is a practical account of human resourcefulness in a land where windchill sends temperatures plummeting down into the minus scale. Details of racons and high-tech laboratories, of tracked vehicles

and thermal clothes are all meticulously recorded. But the greatest problems which Wheeler encounters are those which arise in the provinces of the mind. Isolated in desolate winter darkness, the inhabitants of the bases are driven deeper and deeper into "little animal dens" of themselves, each building for himself a corner in the wreck of his personality in which to retire. Penetrating, vivacious and often amusing, Wheeler's record has a sharp authenticity. But it is when it raises itself above the level of description that her writing is at its best. In the Antarctic "there is always the indefinable which holds aloof yet rivets our soul", wrote Douglas Mawson. It is to this that Wheeler remains keenly alert.

RACHEL CAMPBELL-JOHNSTON

Sharp tongue but no taste

AS A television and restaurant critic, A. A. Gill is poisonously funny and devastatingly astute. His articles read like stories; each hapless chef and television producer gorgeously fleshed out.

Unfortunately, in his first novel, *Sap Rising*, the characters are as lifeless as garden gnomes and the narrative is schoolboyishly crude, lingering with a ravaging lack of taste on descriptions of penis, bottoms and semen. The plot, such as it is, concerns a group of people with an interest in a garden square in central London, all of whom do little more than have sex and spout obscenities. There is sex between an Alsatian dog and the corpse of a reclusive film star; between the aforementioned hound and a pony life pet; between a foul-mouthed harrier and an adze; between the novel's hero, Charles, his girlfriend Jona and Lily, a half-Chinese, half-Vietnamese waif who gives freely of her personal services as a way of getting out

A. A. Gill should turn his wit to more than puerile naughtiness

■ SAP RISING By A. A. Gill Doubleday, £15.99 ISBN 0 385 40789 0

of the ironing. Admittedly, Lily's imitation of Miss Saigon is quite funny the first time, but wearisome with repetition. The novel is sprinkled with annoying literary devices that somehow make it nastier than straightforward pornography: an intrusive narrator who comments archly on the action and a houseful of talking, or rather sniggering, antique furniture.

And yet, and yet ... somewhere in this stupid mess, a serious novel on the state of

the nation is waving and drowning. In a rousing speech to the garden committee, Jona takes time out from doing unusual things with fudge to declare against "the vested interests, the patronage brokers, the greater-good merchants". A nymphomaniac (what else) Hungarian reflects on England: "This was a country where there were volumes of philosophy in the earth and none in the people." An offensively compassionate vicar takes down the old regimental flags that adorn his church — symbols of staid dignity — and replaces them "with polyester-mix sheets celebrating the far more pressing and relevant crusades against intolerance, sadness and being generally under the weather".

It is touches like this that make you long for Gill to lose interest in fiction which is naughty and not at all nice and turn his talent for derision on a subject worthy of it.

PENNY PERRICK

JAMES BOOKS THURSDAY Linda Colley on Sir Roy Strong's *The Story of Britain: Derwent* May on James Lees-Milnes's *Fourteen Friends*; Michael Hofmann looks at the early work of T. S. Elliot; plus new fiction reviewed

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GOING OUT

CHILDREN

LONDON
Go Noah Got
 Puppet fun as Mr and Mrs Noah fight their way through the flood.
Little Angel Marionette Theatre.
 Dagmar Passage, Cross Street, N1 (0171-226 1787). Today, tomorrow, 11am and 3pm; £5, child/concs £4.50.

Pollo and the Star Fairies
 Puppet performance from Nomad Puppets, plus other shows featuring Little Miss Muffet and Jo Jo, Scruffy and Friends.
Nomad Studios.
 Upper Tooting Road, SW17 (0181-767 4005). Tomorrow, 11.30am and 2pm; £2.50.

Whirling Wonders
 Three-year-olds and above are invited to join in a workshop investigating optical toys.
Beithal Green Museum of Childhood.
 Cambridge Heath Road, E2 (0181-983 5200). Today, 11am-12.45pm and 2-3.45pm; free.

Zippo's Circus
 The traditional fun-packed gravity-defying performances, including horses.
Kew Bridge.
 (0374 81181/608090). Today, tomorrow, times vary; £2.50.

REGIONAL
BALLYMONEY
Teddy Festival
 If you go down to the Heritage Centre today, you'll be sure to find teddies aplenty, plus related bear activities.
Heritage Centre.
 Charlotte Street (01265 662280). Today, 10am-12.30pm and 2-4pm; admission free.



Tonbridge: experience a bird's eye view of the countryside at this weekend's Hot Air Balloon Festival, Whitbread Hop Farm, Beltring

DOWNPATRICK

Down County Museum
 Fun, educational tour of the Vikings and Saint Patrick.
Down County Museum.
 The Mall (01396 615218). Today and tomorrow, 2-5pm; free.

GLASGOW
Grandpa's Quiet Day
 Black Box Puppet Theatre, for three to seven-year-olds.

Scottish Mask and Puppet Centre.

Balcarres Avenue (0141-339 6185). Today, 2pm; £3, child £2.

NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

Children's Gallery
 Art and craft activities.
Laing Art Gallery.
 Higham Place (0191-232 7734). Today, 10am-5pm, tomorrow, 2-5pm; free.

Science Factory

Educational Learning tools and toys for children.
Discovery Museum.
 Blandford Square (0191-232 6789). Today, 10am-5pm; free.

TONBRIDGE

Hot Air Balloon Festival
 Up, up and away in 25 hot air balloons for a relaxing bird's eye view of Tonbridge.

Whitbread Hop Farm.
 Beltring (01622 872068). Today, ends tomorrow, phone for details; admission £3.50-£6.

It's a Knockout
 Stars from the Gladiators join members of the public in aid of Child Victims of Crime.
Whitbread Hop Farm.
 Beltring (01622 872068). Tomorrow, 10.30am; £3.50-£6.

COMEDY

LONDON
Banana Cabaret
 Tonight's slot features Smiley, Lee Hurst, Mark Westwood and Neville Raven.
Banana Cabaret. The Bedford.
 Bedford Hill, SW12 (0181-673 1756). Tonight, 9pm; £6, concs £4.

CRITICS CHOICE

COMEDY STORE
 Stand-ups vanish en masse in September, probably sick to the back teeth of cracking jokes after Edinburgh. The comedy circuit is, consequently, quiet as the grave. There is the odd giggle, however. This year's delightfully rambling Perrier Award-winner Dylan Moran is popping into the Comedy Store tonight. Tomorrow, the Store offers its line-up of regulars. Paul Merton will be improvising with Lee Simpson, the multi-talented comic and theatre director Phelim McDermott and others.

KATE BASSETT
The Comedy Store.
 Ozendeau Street, SW1 (0171-344 4444). Tonight, 8pm (doors 6.30pm) and mid night (doors 11pm); tomorrow, 8pm (doors 6.30pm).

Cosmic Comedy Club
 Otis Cannelloni, Brendan Riley, Paul Thorne and Jo Clements. Noel Britten MCs.
Astro Bar and Cosmic Comedy Club.
 Fulham Palace Road, W6 (0171-381 2006). Tonight, 8.30pm; admission £8.

Chiswick Comedy Club
 Tonight's short spots, plus Sean Percival, Mike Hayley and



London, Ha Bloody Ha Ealing Broadway: Helen Austin

Martin Coyote.
Chiswick Comedy Club.
 Rowan's Cafe Bar, Stilehall Parade, Chiswick High Road, W4 (0181-742 1649). Tonight, 9.30pm; £6, concs £4.

Ha Bloody Ha Ealing Broadway
 The hilarious Helen Austin, plus Mike Hayley, Clyde West and Ian Keable.
Harvey Floorbangers (formerly The Haven).
 Haven Green, W5 (0181-566 4067). Tonight, 9.30pm; £6, concs £4.

Hampstead Comedy Club
 Milton Jones, Paul Zenon and Marion Pashley.
Hampstead Clinic at G.E. Aldwinkles.
 Corner Fleet Road and Pond Street, NW3 (0171-485 2112). Tonight, 8.45pm; £5.

POP

LONDON
Irene Cara
 Singer of the theme tunes for *Fame* and *Flashdance*.
The Grand.
 Clapham Junction, SW11 (0171-738 9000). Tonight, 8pm; £6-£7.

The Oyster (Créteil) Band
 Rousing English folk-rockers.
Camden Centre.
 Bidborough Street, NW1 (0171-860 5590). Tonight, 7.30pm; £9-£10.

Thomas Ribeiro
 Funk-rock and soul singer-songwriter.
Ronnie Scott's.
 Frih Street, W1 (0171-439 0747). Tomorrow, 8pm; £8.

REGIONAL
BIRMINGHAM
Big Country - Unplugged
 Epic Scottish rockers with the trademark bagpipe guitar sound.
Ronnie Scott's.
 Broad Street (0121-643 4525). Tonight, 8pm; £16.

Ruby Turner
 Birmingham's soul diva

sings the standards.
Ronnie Scott's.
 Broad Street (0121-643 4525). Tomorrow, 8pm; £15.

CRITICS CHOICE

HEIDI BERRY
 Dublin is currently a hotbed of activity as the town plays host to this year's *In the City* event, a six-day gathering of the music-biz clans. Billy Bragg, Whipping Boy, Gavin Friday and Brian Kennedy are among the many acts performing at various venues until September 11. Pick of the crop this weekend is British-domiciled American singer Heidi Berry. Her latest album, *Miracle*, is a gentle, sometimes sombre collection which combines discreet Celtic and folk influences with neo-classical overtones.
DAVID SINCLAIR

Whelans.
Wedford Street, Dublin (00 3531 478 0766). Tomorrow, 8pm; £6.

CRONDALL
Howe Gelb
 Country-rock, folk and impro from the maverick Arizonan singer and guitarist.
The Pit.
 Itchel Lane (01252 850789). Tonight, 7pm; £24 incl dinner.

DUBLIN
Mary Coughlan, Raissa, Stony Sleep, Daniel Figgis
 Irish torch singer heads a mixed bill for the *In the City* festival.
Mean Fiddler.
 Wedford Street (00 3531 456 9569). Tonight, 8.30pm; £7.50.

Galliano
 Ecologically-minded Acid Jazz funk team, always a good bet live.
Olympia Theatre.
 Dame Street (00 3531 677 7744). Tonight, 11pm; £9.50.

LINCOLN
The Blues Band, The Yardbirds
 Paul Jones's lively crew head up a blues double-bill.
Lincoln Castle.
 Castle Hill (01522 523000). Tonight, 7.15pm; £12.

ROTHERHAM
Folk and Jazz Festival
 Eliza Carthy and Nancy Kerr, Jeff Warner, Tony Capstick, Kate Green Band and more.
Music Marquee.
 Herringthorpe Playing Fields, (01709 823600). Today, 1-5pm; phone for prices.



Birmingham: Ruby Turner performs at Ronnie Scott's

JAZZ

LONDON
Gary Crosby's Nu Troop
 Art Blakey-style aggregation of young London jazz talent, led by the former Jazz Warriors and Jazz Jamaica.
The Bull.
 High Street, Barnet (0181-449 0048). Tomorrow, 8pm; £6, concs £4.

Lorna Luft
 Judy Garland's daughter, a star of many Broadway musicals, here singing Bacharach, Sondheim, Coward and Berlin.
Cafe Royal.
 Regent Street (0171-437 9090). Tonight, 8pm; £25.

Claire Martin Quintet
 Urbane Brix-jazz songstress with pianist Gareth Williams, bassist Arnie Somogyi and drummer Clark Tracey.
606 Club.
 Lots Road, SW10 (0171-352 5953). Tomorrow, 9.30pm; £4.

Bob Ostertag and Phil Minton
 American composer and improviser with a keen interest in electronics and sampling, here playing his solo piece *Burns Like Fire* before duetting with British freeform vocalist Minton.
JCA.
 The Mall, SW1 (0171-930 3647). Tomorrow, 7.30pm; £7.

The Ronners
 Fusing Latin, worldbeat and Celtic folk sources.
Jazz Cafe.
 Parkway, NW1 (0171-344 0044). Tomorrow, 7pm; £8, adv £7.

Paul Rutherford
 Venerated trombonist assembles saxophonists Lol Coxhill and Alan Tomlinson, boogie-edged pianist Howard Riley and guitarist John Russell.
Vortex.
 Stoke Newington Church Street, N16 (0171-254 6516). Tomorrow, 8pm; £4.

Tales and Fables with Scott Stroman. Jacqui Dankworth
 Four semi-staged jazz operas by Scott Stroman. Stravinsky, Michael Daugherty and Benjamin Britten, featuring trombonist Stroman and quirky cabaret singer Jacqui Dankworth.
Purcell Room.
 South Bank Centre, SE1 (0171-961 4747). Tomorrow

REGIONAL
DONCASTER
Gypsy with a Song with the Gypsy Jazz Trio
 Musical biography of Django Reinhardt featuring violinist Victor Hickman and multi-reedist Frank Brooker, bassist Nigel Thompson and Paul Hares and Tony Wright, guitars.
Little Theatre.
 King Street (01302-340422). Tonight, 7.30pm; £5.

CRITICS CHOICE
WARREN VACHE
 The swing tradition is safe in the hands of Warren Vaché, the exuberant American cornet player who begins a national tour tonight. A former Benny Goodman sideman, his accomplishments include teaching Richard Gere to play cornet for his role in the Francis Ford Coppola film, *The Cotton Club*.
CLIVE DAVIS

James Moir Hall.
Mitchell Theatre.
 Granville Street, Glasgow (0141-287 5511). Tonight, 8pm.

ROTHERHAM
Don Lesber's Best of British Jazz Big Band
 Veteran Kiwi trombonist Lusher leads this trad and mainstream session with trumpeter Kenny Baker, saxophonists Alan Barnes and Roy Wilcox, pianist Ronnie Price and singer Sheila Southern. Other acts in the Rotherham Jazz and Folk Festival include Tommy Burton's Sporting House Quartet, the Blue Rhythm Band and the Kid Boyd Jazz Band.
Music Marquee, Herringthorpe Playing Fields.
 (01709 823600). Tomorrow, 7.45pm; £3, concs £2.
Rotherham Jazz Festival.
 (01709 823641). Today, tomorrow, 1-10pm; phone for details.

Struan Leslie: In Our Flesh
 Partially improvised dance work originating from a group project for gay men.
Trinity Buoy Wharf.
 Orchard Place, Leamouth, E14 (0181-286 5700). Tonight, 8.30pm, tomorrow, 4.30pm; free.

The Joffrey Ballet of Chicago: Billboards
 The celebrated American dance company's latest works featuring music hits by Prince.
Festival Hall.
 South Bank Centre, SE1 (0171-960 4242). Tonight 3pm and 8pm, tomorrow, 8pm; £10-£30.

Struan Leslie: In Our Flesh
 Partially improvised dance work originating from a group project for gay men.
Trinity Buoy Wharf.
 Orchard Place, Leamouth, E14 (0181-286 5700). Tonight, 8.30pm, tomorrow, 4.30pm; free.

BUOY*Lux
 An interesting venue, bridging the internal and external, becomes the site for a performance and installation staged by the Earthworks Collective.
Trinity Buoy Wharf.
 Orchard Place, Leamouth, E14 (0181-286 5700). Today, tomorrow, 2pm; free, please book in advance.

The Five Andrews: Un Citron Andalou
 Flamboyant and colourful performance featuring ritualistic activities such as lemon cutting.
Trinity Buoy Wharf.
 Orchard Place, Leamouth, E14 (0181-286 5700). Tomorrow, 4.30pm; free.

The Five Andrews: Vessel
 A marine investigates

in a dance and text-based performance.
Trinity Buoy Wharf.
 Orchard Place, Leamouth, E14 (0181-286 5700). Tonight, 8.30pm; free.

CRITICS CHOICE

GLASGOW
LORD OF THE DANCE
 The Michael Flatley juggernaut roars on. The critics may have carped, but Flatley's Celtic dance extravaganza picks up where *Riverdance* left off. Plenty of great dancing and punchy rock show production values to keep the faithful happy.
DEBRA CRABBE

Scottish Exhibition and Conference Centre.
 (0141-248 9999). Today, 2.30pm and 8pm; £23-£26.

Flamenco Express
 Feisty dance troupe demonstrating the art of the Andalusian gypsies.
Brixton Shaw Theatre.
 The Brix.
 Brixton Hill, opposite the Friage, SW2 (0171-274 6470). Tonight, 8pm; £7, concs £5.

In. Side. Out...
 Site-specific dance about three women looking to belong in the world.
Trinity Buoy Wharf.
 Orchard Place, Leamouth, E14 (0181-286 5700). Today, 3.40pm, tomorrow, 3.40pm and 8pm; free.

The Joffrey Ballet of Chicago: Billboards
 The celebrated American dance company's latest works featuring music hits by Prince.
Festival Hall.
 South Bank Centre, SE1 (0171-960 4242). Tonight 3pm and 8pm, tomorrow, 8pm; £10-£30.

Struan Leslie: In Our Flesh
 Partially improvised dance work originating from a group project for gay men.
Trinity Buoy Wharf.
 Orchard Place, Leamouth, E14 (0181-286 5700). Tonight, 8.30pm, tomorrow, 4.30pm; free.



London: Flamenco Express at the Brixton Shaw Theatre

REGIONAL
BIRKENHEAD
Invisible Cities
 British premiere of Italian Teatro Pottlach's site-specific performance piece highlighting various areas of this part of Merseyside.
Marpeth Docks.
 Offshore Road (0151-666 5023). Tonight, tomorrow, 8pm; £6.50, concs £3.50 (with ferry crossing), £5.50.

BOOKS

LONDON
A.C. Jacobs
 Reading a collection of poems and translations.
Torriano Meeting House.
 Torriano Avenue, NW5 (0171-367 2751). Tomorrow, 7.30pm; £2, concs £1.

Jean Vanier
 A discussion on mental disability.
St Martin-in-the-Fields.
 Trafalgar Square, WC2 (0171-723 5104). Tomorrow, 6.30pm; phone for details.

REGIONAL
EDINBURGH
The Edinburgh Literary Pub Tour
 Zany theatrical tour led by professional actors.
The Beehive Inn.
 The Grassmarket (0131-554 0777). Tonight, 6pm, tomorrow, 1pm and 6pm; £6, concs £5.

FAIRS

LONDON
British Music Fair
 Pick up a bargain at the musical instrument fest.
Earls Court Exhibition Centre.
 Warwick Road, SW5 (0171-373 8141). Today, 10am-6pm; £10, concs in adv.

Heritage Antiques Fair
 Jewellery, glass, enamels, silver, prints, paintings and ceramics on offer.
London Marriott Hotel.
 Grosvenor Square, W1 (0171-493 1232). Tomorrow, 11am-5pm; phone for details.

Latin American Film Festival
Information.
 Various venues, W1 (0171-434 3357). Today, tomorrow, times vary; phone for details.

Mind-Body-Spirit Festival
 Experience a stress-free weekend of spiritual development.
Alexandra Palace.
 Wood Green, N22 (0181-365 2121). Today, tomorrow, 10.30am-7.30pm; £3.

REGIONAL
BOURNEMOUTH
Hot Ice Show
 Flamboyant ice extravaganza.
Bournemouth International Centre.
 Exeter Road (01202 297297). Today, 2.30pm and 8pm; £14-£5.

CHESTER
Jitterbugs
 Festival of contemporary automata, featuring techno toys, interactive sculpture and all things that move.
Grosvenor Museum.
 Grosvenor Street (01244 402017). Today, 10.30am-5pm, tomorrow, 2-5pm; free.

Today, tomorrow, 10am-6.30pm; phone for details.

DUBLIN
Antiques and Collectables
 Wide display of silver, glass, jewellery and decorative items on offer.
Newman House.
 St Stephen's Green (00 3531 670 8295). Tomorrow, 11am-6pm; £1, accompanied children free.

FARNBOROUGH
Farnborough Air Show
 Dynamic air displays featuring the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight, Red Arrows and Concorde.
Farnborough Aerodrome.
 (0541 551996). Today, tomorrow, 9.30am-6pm; £13-£19, child free.



Farnborough: air displays and aerobatics

GLASGOW
Glasgow International Festival of Design
 The work of many prominent designers.
Information.
 Various venues (0141-204 4411). Today, tomorrow, times vary; phone for details.

LUTON
Luton Show '96
 Outdoor music, falconry, gymnastics and gun dog display.
Stockwood Country Park.
 (01582 746718). Opens today, midday-6pm, ends tomorrow, 10am-6pm; admission free-£3.

MARKET BOSWORTH
1485 Battle of Bosworth Field
 Relive the famous battle and enjoy morris dancing.
Bosworth Battlefield.
 (01455 290429). Tomorrow, 1pm; £4, concs £2, children under five free.

MONAGHAN
Harvest Time Monaghan Jazz and Blues Festival
 Experience the sounds of this annual festival.
 Various venues.
 (00 353 47-81122). Tonight, tomorrow, (Hillgrove Hotel) 10pm; £6-£15.

SOUTHSEA
Multi-Cultural Festival
 A celebration of the multi-cultural community around Southsea.
Castle Fields.
 (01705 833194). Tomorrow, 10am-5.30pm; free.

WALTON-ON-THAMES
Country Craft Fayre
 Travel back in time and experience an Olde England fayre.
Apps Court Farm.
 (01344 874787). Today,

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VICTORIA TRAVEL, the gardening cruise specialist, has arranged a special package for *Times* readers, departing from Dover on the *Black Prince* on Wednesday, November 20, 1996. The *Times* party on the 13-night cruise to Madeira and the Canaries will be led by Stephen Anderson, the gardening correspondent of *The Times*.

For bookings made by September 30, prices start at £649 per person for a three berth cabin, £899 per person for a four-berth family cabin. Port charges, insurance, drinks and gratuities are extra. There are entertainment facilities on board the *Black Prince* which can carry 440 passengers.

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 Victoria Travel's island sunshine cruise to Magical Madeira and The Jewels of The Canaries departs from Dover at 5pm on Wednesday November 20, 1996. You return at 9am on Tuesday December 3, 1996. Day 2: cruising; Day 3: visit La Coruna, in the Spanish province of Galicia; Day 4: visit Lisbon, the vibrant capital of Portugal; Day 5: spend the afternoon in Gibraltar; Day 6: cruising; Day 7: visit Las Palmas, the capital of Gran Canaria; Day 8: spend the day in Tenerife; Day 9: arrive at Funchal, the capital of Madeira at 9am; Day 10: depart from Funchal at 1pm; Day 11: cruising; Day 12: visit Vigo, the departure point for the Spanish Armada; Day 13: cruising.

● To get full details of the itinerary, cabin prices and a booking form contact Victoria Travel today, by phone on 0121-445 5656, by fax on 0121-445 6177, or complete the coupon below. Abta no: 78024.

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GALLERIES

LONDON Tacita Dean: Foley Artist Former Slade School of Art artist uses multi-track narratives to investigate sound in film. Tate Gallery, Millbank, SW1 (0171-887 8000). Today, 10am-5.50pm, tomorrow, 2-5.50pm; admission free.

Gravitas Platon and Peter Sanderson collaborate to montage text and fashion images, using innovative frames and state-of-the-art printing techniques. Hamiltons Gallery, Carlos Place, W1 (0171-499 9493). Today, 10am-6pm; free.

Imagined Communities Touring group explores the concept of community in today's techno culture. Festival Hall Galleries, South Bank Centre, SE1 (0171-028 8800). Opens today, tomorrow, 10am-10pm; free.

BP Portrait Award Established annual open submission show of portraiture. National Portrait Gallery, St Martin's Place, WC2 (0171-306 0055). Today, 10am-6pm, tomorrow, midday-6pm; free.

Jack Pierson Hip Stateside artist exhibits new installation-based sculpture and photography. White Cube, Duke Street, SW1 (0171-930 5373). Today, midday-6pm; admission free.

REGIONAL DURHAM Bill Viola The master of the video spectacular shows a projection exploring underwater desires.

Durham Cathedral, Palace Green (0191-384 3720/386 4266). Opens today, 9.45am-4.45pm; free.

EDINBURGH Callum Innes Series of abstract paintings. Inverleith House, Royal Botanic Gardens, Inverleith Row (0131-552 7171). Today, tomorrow, 10am-5pm; admission free.

GLASGOW Craigie Aitchison First solo show to celebrate the artist's 80th birthday. Gallery of Modern Art, Queen Street (0141-331 1854). Today, 10am-5pm, tomorrow, 11am-5pm; free.

CRITIC'S CHOICE THOMAS WORLIDGE

Not perhaps much of a name to conjure with outside Bath, Worlidge (1700-1766) has never had a one-man show there until now, and has consequently been remembered principally as a more than usually eccentric ornament to Bath society in its heyday. From this show it emerges that, in the intervals of marrying three times and fathering 32 children, as well as eating and drinking "recklessly", he had time to produce a considerable body of painting and printmaking which is good as well as odd. His society portraits are unusually robust, but the most interesting part is the numerous etchings he made witnessing a total adulation of Rembrandt. For his self-portrait he even dressed himself as Rembrandt. A weird but ultimately wonderful apostle among the 18th-century Britons.

JOHN RUSSELL TAYLOR Victoria Art Gallery, Pulteney Bridge, Bath (01225 477772). Today, 10am-5pm; free.



Critic's Choice: Thomas Worlidge's self-portrait (detail), on show at the Victoria Art Gallery, Bath

COMING SOON

LONDON From Sep 9 Sunset Boulevard Andrew Lloyd Webber's musical gets a new lease of life when Amanda and singer Rita Moreno takes over the role of Norma Desmond at the Adelphi Theatre for an eight-week season. The current Norma, Petula Clark, returns to the role in November. Box office: 0171-344 0055.

Sep 12-Oct 26 Ashes to Ashes Harold Pinter's latest, starring Lindsay Duncan and Stephen Rea, inaugurates the Royal Court's Theatre Upstairs temporary tenure at the Ambassadors Theatre in the West End. Meanwhile, the Theatre Downstairs moves to the Duke of York's, opening with a revival of Jez Butterworth's Sloane Square hit, Mojo, from October 10. Box office: 0171-730 1745/2554.

Sep 14 BBC Proms in the Park Simultaneous broadcast of the Last Night of the Proms from the Albert Hall to Hyde Park on giant screens. Unreserved picnic style tickets available from 0171-413 3571.

From Sep 17 Uncle Vanya Bill Bryden's Chichester Festival Theatre production transfers to the Albery Theatre, with a cast that includes Frances Barber, Constance Cummings, Trevor Eve, Derek Jacobi, Imogen Stubbs and Peggy Mount. Box Office: 0171-369 1730.

From Oct 15 Smokey Joe's Cafe Broadway musical revue featuring the songs of Leiber and Stoller comes to London's Prince of Wales Theatre. Box office: 0171-839 5972.

Sep 22-Oct 5 Windsor Festival Appearances by Evelyn Glennie, Nikolai Demidenko, Gillian Wier and others. Box office: 0171-341 4444.

REGIONAL LEICESTER Nov 8-Dec 7 Sweeney Todd Paul Kerryson directs a new production of Sondheim's macabre musical thriller at Leicester Haymarket Theatre. Box office: 0116-253 9797.



Rita Moreno is the new Norma in Sunset Boulevard

CLASSICAL

LONDON Anne Sofie von Otter The Wigmore season begins this evening with a collection of works by Alfvén, Sibelius, Grieg and Schubert. Wigmore Hall, Wigmore Street, W1 (0171-935 2141). Tonight, 7.30pm; £10-£25.

BBC National Orchestra of Wales/Athenia Performing Stravinsky's Petrushka and Falla's El amor brujo. Albert Hall, Kensington Gore, SW7 (0171-589 8212). Tomorrow, 7.30pm; £4-£18.

Royal Philharmonic Concert Orchestra/Black Feisty line-up of favourite performers featuring all the crowd-pleasing popular classics. Kenwood, Hampstead Lane, NW3 (0171-413 1443). Tonight, 7.30pm; £13 and £10, cones £10.50.

Roterdam Philharmonie/Gergiev Debussy's evocative La Mer and Prokofiev's Sixth Symphony. Albert Hall, Kensington Gore, SW7 (0171-589 8212). Tonight, 8pm; £4-£18.

REGIONAL BIRMINGHAM Chicago Symphony Orchestra/Barenboim Tchaikovsky's Fifth Symphony, plus Elgar's symphonic study, Falsuff, Symphony Hall.



Daniel Barenboim conducts in Birmingham

BALTIC BONANZA Any festival that starts with a "creation ritual for shaman drum and didgeridoo" deserves a closer look. So welcome to the week-long Vale of Glamorgan Festival, which starts today and spotlights the fascinating, new musical styles of the Baltic states. We know of Arvo Pärt, but what of his Estonian compatriot Urmus Sisask (the gentleman with the penchant for the shaman drum), or the dozen other composers featured in this remarkable festival? Performers from Britain and the Baltic states will be lifting the veil, in venues across Glamorgan.

RICHARD MORRISON Vale of Glamorgan Festival, Festival Box Office, St Donats Arts Centre, Llanwit Major (01446 794848)

THEATRE

LONDON By Jeeves Delightful musical creation by Alan Ayckbourn and Andrew Lloyd Webber, based on the Wodehouse heroes. Duke of York's, St Martin's Lane, W1 (0171-336 5122). Tonight, 7.45pm; mat, 3pm.

CRITIC'S CHOICE JOHN GABRIEL BORKMAN All is grey, angular and forbidding in the rural outback that Richard Eyre and his designer, Antony Ward, have recreated for Ibsen's last important play. But it is a gripping evening, thanks to as powerful a cast as may be found anywhere in London: Paul Scofield as the disgraced financier restlessly haunting his own past; Eileen Atkins as a wife angry and embittered to the very soul; Vanessa Redgrave as her twin sister, come to steal her son from her. The heat generated is extraordinary.

BENEVOLENT NIGHTINGALE Lyttelton, National Theatre, South Bank (0171-928 2252). Tonight, 7.30pm; mat Sat, 2.15pm.

A Midsummer Night's Dream Adrian Noble's much travelled production now recast and in London for five weeks before another national and world tour. Barbican, Silk Street, EC2 (0171-638 8891). In preview today, 2pm and 7.15pm.

They Shoot Horses Don't They The National Youth Theatre's annual season opens with the stage version of Horace McCoy's searing novel describing the dance marathons of the American Depression. The theatre is turned into a dance hall, Edward Wilson directs. Bloomsbury, Gordon Street, WC1 (0171-388 8822). Tonight, 7.45pm; mat, 3pm.

REGIONAL BAGNOR Bluebeard's Castle Last of four performances, inspired by the Bartók opera, performed by a Japanese company. Watermill, (01635 46044). Tonight, 7.30pm.

BIRMINGHAM The Alchemist Co-production with the National Theatre, where it transfers in October. Bill Alexander sets his production in a superstitious, post-apocalyptic future. With Simon Callow, Josie Lawrence and Tim Pigott-Smith. Repertory, Centenary Square (0121-236 4455). In preview tonight, 7.30pm.

COVENTRY Our Day Out Willy Russell's revised version of his bittersweet comedy of a school outing that takes the kids where they don't want to go. Belgrade, Belgrade Square (01203 553055). Tonight, 8pm.

OPERA

LONDON The Magic Flute Stuart Maunder directs this version of Mozart's comedy, produced by the British Youth Opera. Wimbledon Theatre, The Broadway, SW19 (0181-540 0362). Tonight, 7.15pm; £7-£15.

The Magic Flute David Freeman directs this production by Opera Factory. Queen Elizabeth Hall, South Bank Centre, SE1 (0171-960 4242). Tomorrow, 7.15pm; £12-£30.

REGIONAL CRITIC'S CHOICE THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO Opera North is the first of the national companies to get the new season underway, with Caroline Gawn's lively production of Mozart's comedy, sung in Amanda Holden's perky translation by a fresh young cast - Janis Kelly, Mary Hegarty, Anjo Taylor, Roderick Williams and Richard Whitehouse, with Andrew Shore's crusty old Dr Bartolo to relish as well. Paul Goodwin conducts. Rodney Milnes Theatre Royal, St Leonard's Place, York (01904 623568). Today, 7.30pm; £8-£32.

REGIONAL BASINGSTOKE All day flower festival at Mapledurwell and a concert given by the Wessex Chamber Choir. Led and directed by organist Nicholas Wood, the concert will be a mixture of church and light music. Church of St Mary the Virgin, (01256 464435). Today, 7.45pm.

CANTERBURY Kent Police Choir Concert A choir concert will be given by the Kent Police Choir in aid of the Kent Association for the Blind. Canterbury Cathedral, (01227 762862). Today, 7.30pm.

NORFOLK The Dowers of Mary Pilgrimage, Walsingham Cardinal Basil Hume, Archbishop of Westminster and the Right Reverend Peter Smith, Bishop of East Anglia, will lead a pilgrimage of Our Lady of Walsingham. Beginning at 11.30am, the day includes a Rosary meditation at the Shrine, followed by Mass and then a pilgrimage to the Priory Ground for Prayers and Benediction. Parish groups are welcome. Further details can be obtained from the Director, The Pilgrim Bureau, Friday Market, Little Walsingham, Norfolk (01328 820217).



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FILM Films in London and (where indicated with the symbol *) on release across the country

NEW RELEASES Beaumarchais (15) Pleasant costume drama about the wily French author of The Marriage of Figaro. Director, Edouard Molinaro. Curzon West End (0171-369 1722) Richmond (0181-332 0030) Virgin Chelsea (0171-352 5096)

Diabolique (18) Foolish remake of Les Diaboliques, with Sharon Stone and Isabelle Adjani as the women plotting a male brute's murder. UCI Whiteleys (0990 889900) Virgins: Fulham Road (0171-370 2636) Trocadero (0171-434 0031) Warner West End (0171-431 4343)

CRITIC'S CHOICE FALLEN ANGELS (15) Loopy lives collide in Hong Kong, a city of perpetual neon, as filmed by Wong Kar-wai, the cult director of Chungking Express. The images often rush by so fast that you fear for your eyes' safety. Rapid editing fractures the simplest shots; scenes lurch between moody melodrama, brazen farce, and existential screams. Is this the cinema of the future? GEOF BROWN Clapham Picture House (0171-498 3323) ICA (0171-930 3647) Renoir (0171-837 8402)

Hollow Reed (15) Uneven British drama about child abuse, set in Martin Donovan, Joely Richardson and Sam Bould. Director, Angela Pope. Odeons: Haymarket (01426 915 353) Swiss Cottage (01426 914098) Virgin Fulham Road (0171-370 2636)

Mulholland Falls (15) Handsome but muted mystery thriller, set in 1950s Los Angeles, with Nick Nolte and John Malkovich. Director, Lee Tamahori. ABC Shaftesbury Avenue (0171-836 6279) MGM Baker Street (0171-935 9772) Notting Hill Coronet (0171-727 6705) Odeons: Kensington (01426 914666) Swiss Cottage (01426 914098) Ritz (0171-731 2121) UCI Whiteleys (0990 889900) Virgins: Chelsea (0171-352 5096) Haymarket (0171-839 1527) Warner (0171-431 4343)

The Promise (15) A love story divided by the Berlin Wall. Dullish, worthy drama from M...

ERASER (18) Dishvelled Arnold Schwarzenegger vehicle. Director, Charles Russell. ABC Tottenham Court Road (0171-636 6148) Clapham Picture House (0171-498 3323) MGM Baker Street (0171-935 9772) Odeon Kensington (01426 914666) UCI Whiteleys (0990 889900) Virgins: Fulham Road (0171-370 2636) Haymarket (0171-839 1527) Trocadero (0171-434 0031) Warner (0171-431 4343)



Nick Nolte in Mulholland Falls

Stealing Beauty (15) Light and enjoyable Bertolucci film about an American teenager's sexual flowering in Tuscany. Barbican (0171-638 8891) Chelsea (0171-351 3742) Clapham Picture House (0171-498 3323) Curzon Mayfair (0171-369 1720) Gate (0171-727 4043) Lumiere (0171-836 0691) Phoenix (0181-883 2233) Rio (0171-254 6671) Ritz (0171-731 2121) Screen on Baker Street (0171-935 2721) Screen on the Green (0171-226 3520) Screen on the Hill (0171-435 3366) Watermans (0181-568 1176)

EAST SUSSEX Merriments Garden, Hawkhurst Road, Hurst Green The nursery at Merriments was a thriving enterprise before the garden was begun in 1991, on an adjacent field with discouragingly heavy clay soil. Today, generous mulching has tempered the clay and it is hard to believe that the four-acre garden is only a few years old, such is the level of establishment and quantity of outstanding, often rare, plants to be discovered. The garden is arranged as a series of flowing island beds with broad grass paths and areas of lawn between. Towards the top is the most impressive new addition, the Monet garden, with symmetrical borders on either side of a broad gravel path beneath an allée of blue-painted hoops à la Giverny. In these borders, at this time of year, annuals including pink and white cloones, the annual grass Hordeum jubatum, sunflowers and rudbeckias, are especially good. Elsewhere in the

ders, there is enough to keep you absorbed for hours, and certainly enough to tempt you into the nursery next door. Between Hurst Green and Hawkhurst, on A21 (01580 80066). Open tomorrow for National Garden Scheme, 10am-5pm, to end Oct. Daily 9am-5.30pm, nursery open daily all year; £1.50, children free.

GLoucestershire Westobairt Gardens, Westobairt School, or Tebury Westonbirt's internationally famous arboretum is well known to garden enthusiasts, but not so many know of the grand gardens that lie across the main Tebury to Cirencester road, beyond the ornate pair of lodges that give a flavour of what to expect.

The house was built by Lewis Villiamy between 1964 and 1971, for the millionaire R.S. Holford. Since then the house has become a school, and tomorrow is one of the rare opportunities during the year to visit the gardens, which cover more than 20 acres. Here is Victorian Italianate gardening on an impressive scale. The Italian garden to the east of the house has gazebos and other buildings that match the riches of the house's decoration. Rare conifers and other specimens such as the sumach have attained splendid size, and the visitor is immediately aware that the trees are grouped and positioned with immense skill - as is also the hallmark of the arboretum. 3.5m south of Tebury off A433 (01666 880242). Open tomorrow for National Garden Scheme, 2pm-5.30pm; £1.50, children 25p.

SCOTLAND Castle of Mey, Caithness The editors of The Good Gardens Guide may be somewhat over-zealous in their loyalty to the Crown by awarding the Queen Mother's garden a coveted two stars (one of only 15 in the Scottish section). Nonetheless, the most northerly castle in Britain, purchased by the Queen Mother in 1954 after the death of her husband, King George VI, does have its own magic. Approached down a long avenue of gnarled, wind-battered sycamores, the castle, built of local sandstone, looks out north across the Pentland Firth only a couple of hundred yards away to the Orkneys. A great stone wall extends away from the seaward side of the castle to give protection, and the main garden is a square enclosure surrounded by high walls on all sides. As the castle is in small scale, the garden is similarly proportional. The neat pattern of rectangular beds divided by paths is given delightful intimacy by the network of clipped mixed hedges in which hardy fuchsias testify to the mild climate. In one corner, beside a delightful battle-ment lower, stands a small conservatory filled with a brilliant summer display of annuals.

Ruth Gledhill says Amen to a female-led service for Catholic priests A woman with mass appeal



THE LAST thing I expected, attending a conference of the all-male Roman Catholic priesthood, was to experience a Catholic "liturgy" led by a woman. Yet lay woman Joanne Boyce, a talented musician and songwriter, was such a hit with the 80 priests when she led their worship last year that they voted unanimously to invite her back. At the conference this week in Birmingham the priests were discussing issues such as declining morale among their fellow men, falling numbers of vocations and why there is a steady trickle of young priests who forsake their calling within a few years of ordination. The many leaving to get married. The majority of Catholics here are not as vocal as the laity in France where hundreds are seeking to be "unbaptised" in protest at the Vatican's refusal to compromise on issues such as married priests, the ordination of women and contraception. But during the hour-long concert, I sensed an undercurrent of support for some such changes which many believe are essential if the Catholic church is to thrive into the next millennium. I had never before experienced such a role reversal in worship, and there was something moving about being seated

had prepared especially for the conference. Apart from the Lord's Prayer and the final hymn, the latter composed by Joanne, we remained seated throughout. The altar was spoliated before us, but as dusk settled we sat amid an encircling gloom, creating an atmosphere of spirituality and romance reminiscent of Newman's own hymn, Lead Kindly Light. Our surroundings were quickly forgotten as Joanne opened our service with a prayer: "Give us this night untroubled rest and build our strength anew: your splendour driving far away all darkness of the foe." She then announced a moment of calm before leading us in an Argentinian song of praise: "Santo, Santo, Santo; Mi corazon teadora." The reading was highly educative. "It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of the needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven," we heard. As a child I had always assumed that line did not apply to me because I would grow up to be a woman. At this back-to-front service, those words began for the first time to assume their intended significance. Joanne reflected then on the many attachments we have which come between us and God. "There are so many things to choose from. Let us reflect for a few moments on what these things are and pray for the strength to surrender them." We reflected as bidden. No doubt some of us could have stayed there all night but it was soon time for intercessions. We were invited by Joanne to pray out loud, or in the silence of our hearts. In the silence, we suddenly heard the deep, lone voice of a priest speaking up from the depths of the chapel. "We pray for all those who have not felt able to continue in active ministry as ordained priests," he said, "that they may find other ways of serving Jesus for his kingdom."

AT YOUR SERVICE ★ A five-star guide ★ LITURGY LEADER: Joanne Boyce ARCHITECTURE: Although modern and with linoleum tiles, St Mary's chapel somehow works as an uplifting place of worship. ★★★ SERMON: none as such, although Joanne interjected with helpful thoughts, such as inviting us to reflect on our attachment to worldly things. MUSIC: modern spiritualist-style worship songs, well as the Magnificat to a setting by Joanne. ★★★★★ LITURGY: songs, readings and silence. The hour flew by. ★★★★★ SPIRITUAL HIGH:

Buzzards soar away from the valleys

Feather Report

BUZZARDS are three feet long, but they have an eye as large as a human being's. With that formidable ocular power, they can detect faint movements in the grass far below them as they soar above a valley. They are magnificent dark brown birds, circling in the sky with motionless wings for long periods. They hold their wings horizontal, with the tips slightly up, and they look like giant moths, with the head only slightly breaking the line of the wings in front. Their mewing calls can be heard from a long way away.

Buzzards were once found across most of this country, but nowadays it is in the western valleys that they have their strongholds. They need woods to nest in, and open

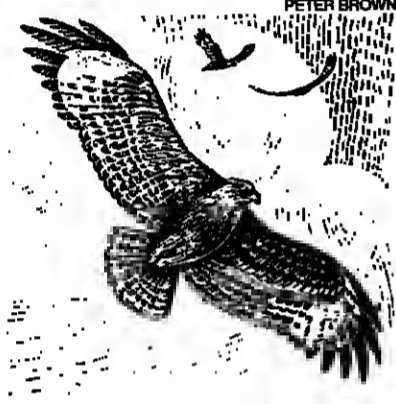
drift away from their native valleys, and continental birds migrating south sometimes come along our coast. In eastern Europe there is a substantial migration, with the buzzards gaining height by climbing on warm currents of air, and then gliding south until they meet another one.

It would be hard to mistake a buzzard for any other common British bird, but two other kinds of buzzard are occasionally met with here. A few pairs of honey buzzards nest in woods in central and southern England, but their whereabouts are kept so secret by local birdwatching groups that even the larger bird organisations sometimes do not know where they are. They are not easy to distinguish from ordinary buzzards in the air, though they have longer, narrower wings. They have the remarkable habit of eating the larvae of wasps, which they dig out of nests.

The other buzzard is the rough-legged buzzard, so named because its feathers come down to its toes. It too is very like the common buzzard, but can be distinguished from below by its mainly white tail. The rough-legged buzzard is a winter visitor, and in some years large numbers are reported, on or near the east coast.

DERWENT MAY

What's about: **Birds** - look and listen for meadow pipits returning from their upland breeding areas. Twitches - adult lesser greyshrike, Burnham Overy, Norfolk; tawny pipit, Portland, Dorset; ortolan bunting, Rame, Cornwall. Details from *Birdline* 0891 700222. Calls cost 40p a min cheap rate, 50p at other times.



Most buzzards are seen in the west

land to forage over. Much of central England would suit them, and no one really knows why, as gamekeepers have departed, the buzzards have not come back. They feed mainly by swooping down on careless rabbits and voles, and will also eat dead laboys. They are no threat to any human interest.

This is the best time of year to see a buzzard over on the east side of Britain. They do not migrate, but young birds

Rabbits come in from the cold

Jack Crossley on the campaign to get us to bring these intelligent animals indoors



Erin Hunter with Fluffy. "He was easy to house train. He has his own room and likes to play board games"

If you were asked to name a pet which is bright, inquisitive, affectionate, intelligent, a joy to watch and touch and be with? Probably not, but there is a new group campaigning to persuade us to keep rabbits in our homes.

As recently as the start of this year, the British House Rabbit Association had only 20 members, but at the last count there were 190 and more than 2,000 others have asked for membership forms and information packs.

Linda Dykes, president of the BHRA, says: "We want to raise the status of the rabbit in Britain and dispel the idea that rabbits are either children's pets or dinner. Keeping rabbits indoors is nothing new in other countries, but the British public does not realise that not only is it easy to keep a rabbit indoors, but that the animal receives a better life."

"We want to raise the pet rabbit to equal status with dogs and cats and aim to improve the quality of life for all domestic rabbits. No one would contemplate locking up a dog alone in a small cage for its entire life, so why is this acceptable for rabbits?"

But is it difficult to keep the animals indoors? According to Helen Flack of the BHRA, rabbits are easy to house train. "They are clean animals and learn to use a litter tray quickly. If your rabbit makes early mistakes, encourage it to use the litter tray by removing its pellets from wherever they have been deposited, and putting them in the tray. If urinating in the wrong place is a problem, just shout 'no' and stamp your foot. Rabbits stamp their feet as a warning in the wild and they soon get the message if you do it. We recommend wood or paper-based litter in the tray, along with a handful of hay." The BHRA can provide a reprint of *A Rabbit in the House*, an article supplied by the House Rabbit Society USA.

With commendable frankness, it tells you what lovable animals they are, and ends with a section entitled "Destructive Chewing".

The authors, Amy Shapiro and Nancy LaRoche, report: "Caring for a rabbit means getting to know him/her, a process that takes time and patience. Rabbits respond to love and attention. Isolated rabbits become bored and withdrawn."

"Choose a rabbit as you would choose any other friend, not by his appearance, but by who is under-

neath his floppy ears. Sit quietly and give the rabbit a chance to show you his unique personality."

You are advised not to adopt a rabbit under one year old. Shapiro and LaRoche warn that a "precious little ball of fur may suddenly become the bunny from hell as hormones begin making themselves felt. A hissing, nipping and apparently furious little beast now inhabits that soft furry body. You may be subjected to golden showers sprayed on you, your children and your furniture as bunny experiences the powerful urges of sexual maturity."

And there's more: rabbits are not for small children as they don't like noisy brats. They don't always like each other much. Two males will rarely become friends, but two females or a neutered male and spayed female can be persuaded to get along.

Back to destructive chewing: "Rabbits love to chew. It is as natural for them as digging, hopping, sniffing and being adorable. One of the greatest household dangers is electrical cords. Most rabbits find them irresistible. Unless you want to switch to a battery-operated house, you will need to do some rabbit proofing."

The advice is to use heavy plastic cord-cover and provide plenty of chewing objects, such as plain untreated wood, straw and hay. "A cardboard or wooden box makes a delectable, inexpensive 'edible' house."

If you already have a house rabbit, Sue Hunter would like to hear from you. She is working on a book as part of her master of science course in companion animal behaviour at the University of Southampton.

Sue's 11-year-old daughter, Erin, has a smoky pearl Netherland Dwarf rabbit, called Fluffy. "He was easy to house train and now has his own room. He has made a fuss over my daughter and her friends and likes to play board games with them. A rabbit is an intelligent creature. As intelligent as a dog; much more so than a cat. I want to give something back to pet rabbits."

For more information about house rabbits send an SAE to Sue Hunter, 22 Strawberry Fields, Hedge End, Southampton, Hampshire SO30 4QY.

For a copy of *A Rabbit in the House* and pamphlets on house rabbits send an SAE to the BHRA, 150 Wingrove Road, Newcastle-upon-Tyne NE4 9BX.

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Felix's rivals licked - so far

SALES OF Felix in the £600 million-a-year market are now just a whisker ahead of Whiskas, thanks to the commercials featuring a mischievous black and white moggy. The current ad only lasts for 20 seconds, but it cost Spillers £1.2 million, and artist Richard Purdum spent 375 hours masterminding the drawing of 1,000 separate images of Felix. Now Whiskas is planning to fight back in the cat food wars with a new "more fluffy, cuddly image".

Mane event

A PLAN to beat horse thieves is under way with the establishment of Horsewatch groups around the country. They recommend freeze-marking your horse with identification letters and numbers. This involves using



Freeze-marking a horse on its shoulder may deter thieves

PET NEWS

Bear necessity

AN ANIMAL sanctuary is appealing for teddy bears. They want them as "surrogate mothers" for orphaned ducks. Peter Wakeham, manager of the Animal Line, says his orphans find it difficult to settle when they arrive at his sanctuary in West Sussex. As an experiment he tried introducing them to a teddy bear. Instant success - but there is a lot of wear and tear involved in giving mother love to a brood of ducklings. If you have a teddy bear to spare, why not send it to Animal Line, The Lodge, Broadhurst Manor, Horsted Keynes, Haywards Heath, West Sussex RH17 7BC.

Teacher's pet

PETS ARE increasingly becoming a study subject on the school curriculum. If you are involved in bringing pets into the classroom or want more information, there is a 36-page fact-pack (£2.50) plus a pet year-planner and other aids as well as *The Good Curriculum Guide* (all free), available from the Pedigree Pet Foods Education Centre, PO Box 77, Swadlincote, Derbyshire DE11 7BR.

What's up, doc?

EVERY DOG and cat lover should have a copy of *Dog Doctor* and *Cat Doctor* by Mark Evans. The books focus on giving you the necessary information to understand your pet's behaviour and appearance, so enabling you to recognise when they need medical attention. Published by Mitchell Beazley on September 16, price £10.99.

That's no rat

SEAGULLS as pets? Not easy. But some folk manage to grow fond of what others call the rats of the sky.

Who wants a pet seagull?

Kirsty Witts became a surrogate mother to an abandoned baby seagull, which she named Spot. It was handed over to the RSPCA in Plymouth where she works. Kirsty took the gull home to nurse it and teach it to fly. Now the fearsome-beaked creature has been released - but Kirsty hopes to meet it occasionally. Holidaymakers think she has lost her dog



Who wants a pet seagull?

when, bemused, they see her staring into the sky calling out "Spot, Spot, come on Spot". Helga Medlen has a pet seagull at Polperro, Cornwall. It flies wild all day, but returns each day demanding food by pecking at the Medlens' cat flap. Helga's resident pet - a generously proportioned ginger tom called Spotty - sits and watches the performance and, wisely, does not interfere.

JACK CROSSLEY

Goodness, gracious, great balls of fur

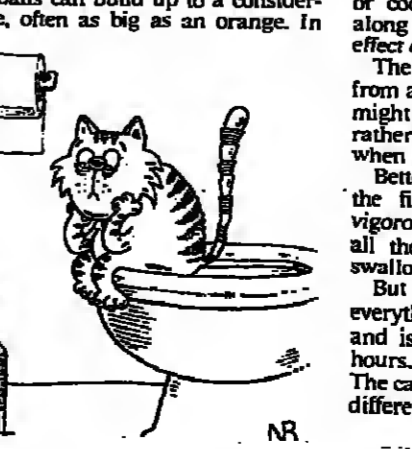
CATS ARE fastidious creatures. They spend hours washing and grooming themselves, swallowing quantities of their hair in the process, which subsequently turns into furballs.

They can deal with some types of solid, indigestible material, of course. Hunting cats eat feathers, bones, rabbit and mice skins. Their digestive enzymes sort things out, so unwanted material pass through the cat without difficulty. But large quantities of hair poses problems. It is churned about in the stomach and tangles into a solid mass.

Many cats cure themselves by vomiting the furball, which looks like a hairy sausage. All's well - until next time.

This vomiting is often accompanied by alarming noises: ear-splitting yowls suggesting unendurable agony. Ten seconds later the same cat has forgotten all about it and is purring and asking for food. Sympathetic cat-owners usually take much longer to recover.

If a furball is not ejected by vomiting, it leaves the stomach and travels into the much narrower intestine, where it can



cat loses all interest in food. It is overfull already and, if it does eat, it is likely to vomit a few minutes later because there is no room for fresh food.

extreme cases they have to be removed surgically. Most can be dealt with by encouraging them on their way with the help of a lubricant. A dose or two of liquid paraffin makes it easier. There's no substitute for liquid paraffin: it oils the bowel from one end to the other. Olive oil or cod liver oil are absorbed partway along the digestive tract and their oiling effect doesn't extend far enough.

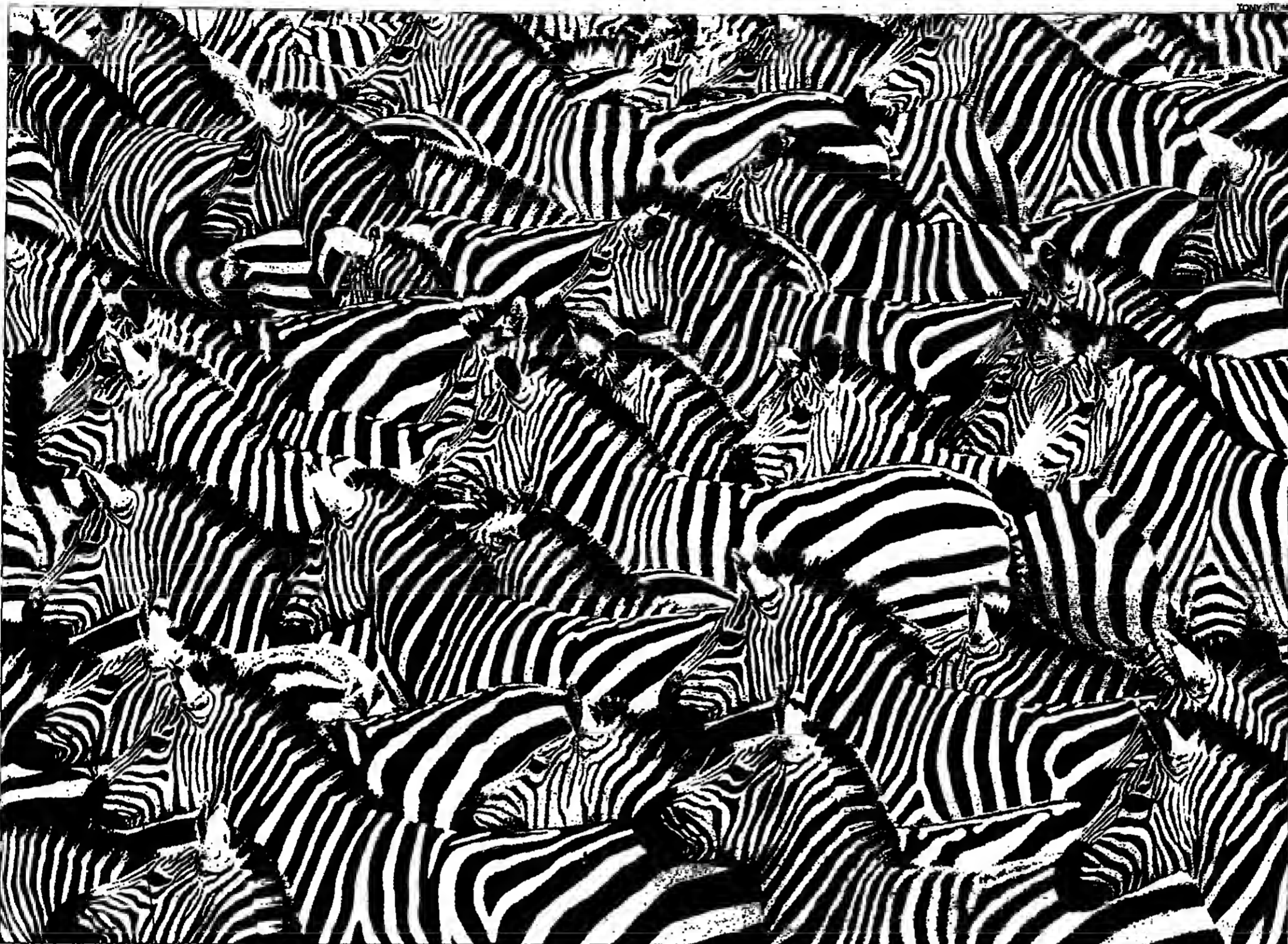
The best way to give liquid paraffin is from a small bottle or a syringe (your vet might let you have a used, sterilised one) rather than a spoon. This avoids spillage when the cat struggles.

Better still, prevent furballs forming in the first place by combing your cat vigorously. Use a steel comb and remove all the dead hair. Then the cat can't swallow it.

But beware: don't blame furballs for everything. If your cat vomits a furball and isn't back to normal within a few hours, it would be wise to visit your vet. The cat may be suffering from something different, and potentially more serious.

Botswana: Simon Barnes sees the desert around the Makgadikgadi Pan as few bushmen have ever seen it

Elysian fields of the Kalahari



The desert's sudden bonanza of fresh grass after the rains sparks off an endless sea of wildlife around the Makgadikgadi Pan, such as a great herd of zebra, pelicans, cormorants, fish eagles and frogs

In Britain birds sing when the sun comes up. In Africa they sing when it goes down. In Britain our hearts sink when it rains. In Africa, when it rains, the spirits soar. What is true for Africa counts double, quadruple in the Kalahari desert.

In Britain the sun vanishes for half a year. It comes back in the spring, and it lights the green touchpaper: suddenly, life is teeming again, everything is feeding, breeding, singing, getting on at full speed with the business of life. But in the desert the green touchpaper is lit by the rain. When it comes.

The same equation operates on every corner of the Earth: sun plus water equals life. It is merely that the sun and the water are everywhere mixed in different proportions. In the Kalahari, the sun is relentless, the water a precious gift.

The Kalahari is one of the harshest environments on Earth. But as I soared above it, riding pillion on a microlight — a hang-glider with a lawn-mower engine on the back — I looked down over an endless sea of green, the Elysian fields of the Kalahari.

As the sun went down, the green was broken up by manganese slashes: the setting sun reflected from a thousand ephemeral pools. You can look on this place as a desert; alternatively, you can see it as the largest ephemeral water system in the world.

Next morning at dawn I was up there again, soaring over the briefly endless seas of life. We flew over a gathering of 500 zebra, brought here by the desert's sudden bonanza of fresh grass. For a while we flew with a fish eagle. A fish eagle? No fish in a desert. Ah, but there are frogs, so the bird was temporarily a frog eagle, another opportunist coming in for a feast.

You don't see frogs often in the desert. They spend most of their life in a torpor, buried and wrapped in an envelope of their own shed skin: frogs in clingfilm. Come the rain, come the frogs.

From my tent I heard the croaks and clicks and roars of an ocean of frogs, because it had rained for years. The best rains since 1988, I was told.

Few people, then, have seen the Kalahari as I have. Bushmen have lived here for 40,000 years: how many died without seeing it as I did?

The area I stayed in is named for the water that is

Makgadikgadi Pan. I flew out one afternoon over the main pan. From the air, it looked like a concrete helicopter pad, magnified to megalomaniacal dimensions. The exposed earth was grey. Everything was grey apart from the flamingos: a vast and pink city of them. There were about one million birds in all.

The contradictions of this strange season were ineluctable. I thought about subjects for study: the ducks of the Kalahari: why not? I saw seven species of duck, also geese and pelicans and cormo-



Up to a million flamingos form a pink city at the Pan

ran. Many birds were just passing through: taking advantage of the brief bonanza of the rains. Others were breeding, which is a noisy business. There were bits of desert, echoing with birdsong as if we were in a nice garden in the Home Counties. True, not blackbirds and robins, but cisticolas and rufous-naped larks and yellow-billed hornbills and the altogether ridiculous and deafening black korhaan.

I came to the desert seeking austerity and found nothing, but riches — and something to boast about: I added two new

bird species to the camp records. One was willow warbler — yes, you do get that in suburban gardens in the Home Counties. The same ones: you can hold a dozen in your cupped hands, and yet they commute all that way twice a year.

The other was a fan-tailed cisticola, which is not to be confused with the zining cisticola, a bird that is sometimes known as the fan-tailed warbler. Cisticolas are little brown birds, and there are lots of different species and they all look exactly the same. So I was odiously puffed up about identifying it.

Such miracles of observation apart, the desert keeps you in your place. Most places I have stayed when chasing wildlife across Africa have been imposed on to wilderness, as it were parasitically.

Here, in Jack's Camp, there was a most peculiar feeling of roots. As if it had grown there. There were human associations with this place and its surroundings: you could feel it, and very eerie it was, too. Parity, it is the camp itself. It was called Jack's Camp after a man who used to camp there. He ran safaris for the rich and the famous half a century back: his son, Ralph, now runs the place.

Near Jack's Camp stands a tree 4,000 years old: a giant of a baobab. It is the only landmark in a flat wilderness, and it has been a gathering place for centuries. Livingstone camped there: so did every other explorer who passed this way. Chapman even carved his initials on the tree: the scar of more than a century ago is still visible. It feels more cathedral than tree, and the bushmen, not a people given to trivialising, have always treated it as such.

I sat beneath its canopy at sundown with the usual aleatory collection of fellow guests you meet on such occasions, and the spell of the tree, of the place came upon us. We talked quietly of life and of death, saying things we did not commonly say.

We left, much later, shaking ourselves surreptitiously, and wondering if we were leaving or returning to real life. Above, it seemed there were more stars than there was black background.

Be very careful of this place. Subtle and cumulative, it eats into your soul.

Art of Travel, 21 The Bakehouse, Bakery Place, 119 Altenburg Gardens, London SW11 1JQ (0171-738 2038), offers trips to Botswana from £1,940 per person sharing, including two nights B&B at the Victoria Falls Safari Lodge and five nights, all-inclusive, at Jack's Camp. The price also includes international economy class flights with Air Zimbabwe, regional flights with Air Botswana, all transfers and return charter flights from Maaui to Jack's Camp.



KALAHARI FACT FILE

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■ Independent flights: Air Zimbabwe (0171-491 0009), London-Victoria Falls return (via Harare) from £859 per person. Air Botswana (0171-757 2737), Victoria Falls/Maaui/Victoria Falls, from £112 per person.

■ Accommodation: Victoria Falls Safari Lodge (00 263 13 3201/2/3/4), from £120 (about £80) per person per night with B&B. Transfers to and from the lodge extra. Jack's Camp (00 267 212277), from £220 per person per night, including all meals, drinks, laundry and activities. Transfers to and from camp extra.

■ Climate and wildlife: the wet season, with daytime temperatures of about 30C, is from November to March. The best time for birdwatching is January to March. Animal migration is in March. Dry season daytime temperatures are 23-24C, and evenings can be chilly; this is the better season for watching game.

■ Health check with your GP, or with MASTA (Medical Advisory Service for Travellers Abroad) traveller's health line (089) 224100 for the latest information on vaccination requirements and for advice on anti-malaria precautions.

THE GOLDEN LAND

A 15 DAY JOURNEY ALONG THE IRRAWADDY RIVER FROM PROME TO MANDALAY
October 1996-February 1997 from £2995

In 1885, the British annexed the ancient kingdom of Burma and so began a love affair which lasted until the Second World War. They discovered an enchanting land of gilded pagodas and fairytale palaces, and a varied and rich landscape inhabited by warm, gentle and fun loving people.

Today, the visitor on arriving in Myanmar (renamed since 1989) is still likely to be entranced, finding a country which is still extraordinarily picturesque and populated by a people of great natural warmth and impeccable manners, who are ever mindful of their rich traditions, customs and culture.

Of course, there is still much to see and wonder at in Rangoon, Mandalay and Pagan. However, our first love is the Irrawaddy River — and the travellers who choose to come with us are transported into another time. Buddhist hospitality and Burmese cordiality combine to make each landing in small towns and villages a memory that most of us will carry for the rest of our lives.

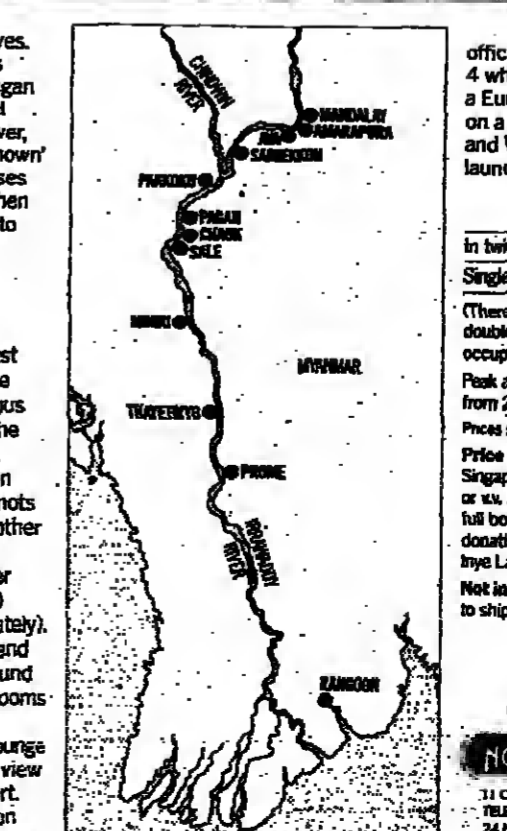
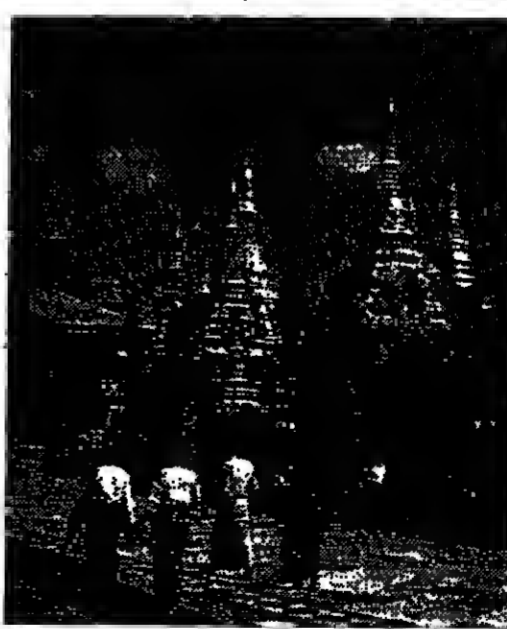
If all you wish to see of Burma is the main tourist run of Rangoon, Pagan and Mandalay, there are many travel companies who can oblige. If however, you are more attracted by the 'unknown' Burma and areas which in many cases cannot easily be reached by road, then our Irrawaddy voyage can take you to these precious places.

THE MYAT THANDA

Built only last year in China and delivered this year, we will be the first people to use the 'Myat Thanda'. She draws 3.5 feet in the water and is thus ideal for the shallow conditions of the often difficult to navigate Irrawaddy. Powered by German engines she can achieve an up-stream speed of 11 knots allowing us more time ashore than other ships on the river.

Designed as a multi-purpose river vessel, the Myat Thanda has only 10 double cabins (14x12 feet approximately). Each cabin has a private bathroom and promenade deck. The cabins are sound proofed and air-conditioned. The bathrooms have copious supplies of hot water.

There is a glassed-in observation lounge in the fore that offers a spectacular view of the river in air-conditioned comfort. The ship's library with many books on Burmese history and culture is kept here.



There is also a spacious bar and dining room mid-ship, though we frequently offer buffets on the open deck.

The remainder of this 200 foot long and 36 foot beam ship is open deck space, intended for local cargo and deck passengers. We have tastefully converted these open deck areas with a sun deck, partly covered by an awning, bar and buffet area on the top deck offering the best view and there is a broad open promenade deck below.

The Myat Thanda has two fibre glass dinghies for explorations into areas where the main vessel cannot penetrate. She is fully equipped with international standard fire fighting and safety equipment and is centrally air-conditioned. There is a water filtration and sterilisation system to ensure hygiene and safety standards are maintained. The bridge has radio communications.

There are 16 ship's crew and officers and there is a hotel staff of 4 who are under the supervision of a European Hotel Manager. Meals will be on a 'table d'hôte' basis, varying Asian and Western dishes. There is also a ship's laundry on board.

PRICES PER PERSON

In twin bedded cabin/room £2995

Single cabin/room supplement £1195

(There are no single cabins on board and one double cabin will be made available for solo occupancy per cruise).

Peak air supplement of £259 applies to all departures from 26 January-25 February 1997 inclusive. Prices subject to change. Parts subject to change.

Price includes: Economy class air travel London-Singapore-Rangoon, return and Mandalay-Rangoon or vice versa, 10 nights aboard the Myat Thanda on full board, all shore excursions, entrance fees and donations, transfers, port taxes, 2 nights at the Inye Lake or Savoy Hotels, UK departure tax.

Not included: Travel insurance, airport taxes, tips to ship's crew.

FOR FURTHER DETAILS

Please telephone 0171-409 0376 (7 days a week during office hours)

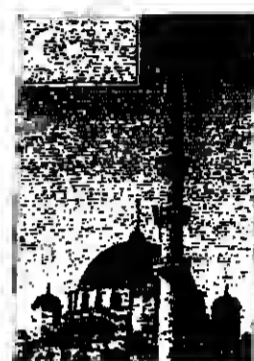
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TRAVEL DIRECTORY



BARBADOS
Everyone's guide to the island where parents are pampered
PAGES 18,19



ISTANBUL
An unforgettable city of massages and mosques
PAGE 20



SKIATHOS
Greek haven where hedonists go on holiday
PAGE 22

TRAVEL TIPS, PAGE 23

Barbados: Everyone's guide to this island idyll — the hotels, restaurants, bars and nightclubs, plus ...

DUNCAN STEWART

Welcome to the selfish parents' club

JAMES MacMANUS reports on one of the most popular tourist centres in the Caribbean and discovers a wealth of treats — from enchanting mongooses for the young to total indulgence for the grown-ups. And there is no shortage of people to look after the children while you order a rum punch and relax

The mongoose, bright-eyed, bushy-tailed and looking every inch the Rikki Tikki Tavi of Kipling's celebrated story, joined us for breakfast on most mornings of our holiday. The egg we had carefully placed on the grass outside our hotel room was examined, sniffed and rolled beneath a nearby bush. This was too much for our children aged three, five and 13. With whoops, they descended on the bush to find only the shell, neatly cracked and licked clean. Of the mongoose there was never a trace — until the next morning's visit.

With deft lateral thinking, an imperial administrator shipped mongooses from India to Barbados in the last century at the behest of a white plantocracy alarmed by the loss of labourers to snake

bites. Now the snakes have gone, leaving behind a regiment of Rikki Tikki Tavis whose charm, it has to be said, is limited if you happen to be a Bajan chicken farmer.

We met our mongoose in the gardens of the Sandpiper Inn and it was not the only surprise about a small family-run beachfront hotel that lies 30 minutes from the airport on the popular west coast. We had chosen Barbados for an Easter family holiday because it offered, at the end of a direct 8½-hour flight from London, warm seas, safe beaches and the back up of good medical services. But, as founding members of the Selfish Parents Party, my wife and I wanted something better for ourselves than the awful food and third-rate service that often comes with "child-friendly" hotels. At first glance, the Sandpiper looked fine for self-ish parents if rather less appropriate for their children. With 45 rooms and suites, it has the aura of a luxurious refuge for the rich and powerful — which is exactly what it is. The atmosphere is companionable and club-like. A well-polished slab of teak makes a grown-up bar where Colin Marshall of British Airways and other corporate eagles sip property-made rum sours (unlike the pre-mixed plastic bucket variety).

The restaurant, like the bar, is half-open to the Caribbean breeze, and has a menu that delivers barracuda, tuna, red snapper, swordfish and kingfish properly grilled and seasoned with local spices. The homemade pasta is excellent and the range of Chilean and Californian whites pricey but well chosen. Along with the Cobblers Cove, the Sandpiper provides the best hotel food on the island.

The surprise is that Wayne and Karen Capaldi, whose family owns and runs the hotel, manage to pull off the double. Young children, although banished from the bar and dining rooms at night, are given their own space, their own food and a generally good time. There are no chicken nuggets or fish fingers on the children's menu, the rainy-day television room beams out awful but mesmerising cartoons and there is enough room on the smallest beach for the children not to disturb stressed out executives pretending to read Proust.

Parent heaven starts at night because reliable babysitters are readily supplied by the hotel: at £3 an hour by day, £4 at night and a nanny for an eight-hour day at the bargain price of £15. These prices are roughly similar in all major hotels. Thus liberated, we fell upon the delights of Holletown village, a few minutes walk from the hotel.

The village has a good supermarket, delicatessen, banks, a bookshop and a memorial to the first English settlers in 1627. A rum sour at Olive's and dinner next door at the Mews (or vice versa) begins an evening which can end with a 20-minute taxi ride to the three best of many seriously noisy nightclubs, the Boatyard, Harbour Lights and the Ship Inn, playing everything from reggae to rock.

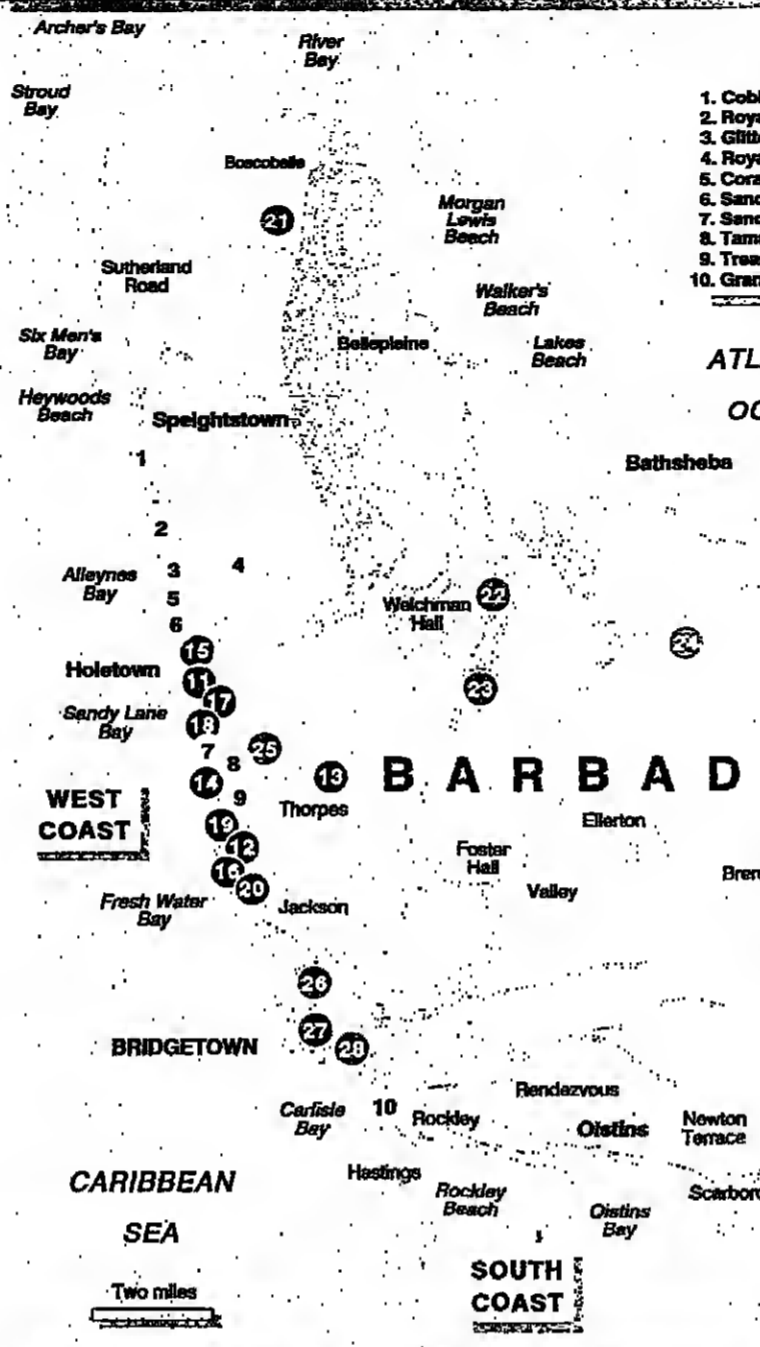
For those with teenagers, the Sandpiper's sister hotel, the Coral Reef, or the Glitter Bay are ideal. Both are set in acres of grounds and front long beaches. The gardens of Glitter Bay can swallow six noisy children playing football and its suites — all with kitchens, sitting rooms and two balconies — are among the best on the island.

Barbados is a little too tame, too blandly affluent, too Kensington-on-sea for some tastes.

FACTS ABOUT BARBADOS

Barbados is in the windward group and the most easterly of the Caribbean islands. It is a pear-shaped coral island 21 miles long and 14 miles wide. The west and south coasts face the Caribbean with palm-fringed sandy beaches. The Atlantic eastern coast is rugged and windy with limestone cliffs and rough seas. From April to October Barbados is five hours behind British time and from October to April it is four hours behind. It is sub-tropical with an average of 3,000 hours of sunshine each year. The average temperature is 27°C (80°F) and there is almost always a gentle sea breeze. The hurricane season runs from July to September but Barbados has not suffered a major hit since 1951.

The capital is Bridgetown which lies at the south-west point of the island. Most of the island's 280,000 inhabitants live in the capital. It is an independent country within the British Commonwealth and its parliament is the third oldest in the world. Driving is on the left and a Barbadian driving licence must be obtained before hiring a car. It has one of the busiest cruise terminals in the world and expects to handle half a million passengers this year. Flights to Barbados from Britain take about nine hours. The cheapest British Airways Apex flight is now £734 return and business class return fares start at £1,998. A flight only fare with a charter airline such as Britannia is currently £395.



COBBLERS COVE

Cobblers Cove is an old beachside manor house considered by many to be the best hotel on the island. Quiet and intimate, it still manages to be part of the local Speightstown community. Excellent food and beach.

SANDPIPER

Sandpiper Inn is a small family-run hotel which draws visitors back year after year. Stylish and companionable with some of the best food on the island. Two-storey suites and rooms set amid colourful gardens.

HOTELS

1. Cobblers Cove
2. Royal Pavilion
3. Glitter Bay
4. Royal Westmoreland
5. Coral Reef
6. Sandpiper
7. Sandy Lane
8. Tamarind Cove
9. Treasure Beach
10. Grand Barbados

RESTAURANTS

11. La Maison
12. Caranbola
13. Begette
14. Bombee
15. Ragamuffins
16. The Cliff
17. Olives
18. The Mews
19. Fathoms
20. Nicos

ATTRACTIONS

21. St Nicholas Abbey
22. Flower Forest
23. Harrison's Cave
24. Villa Nova
25. Holders
26. Mt Gay Rum Centre
27. Kensington Oval
28. Atlantis
29. Sunbury
30. Crane Beach

TAMARIND COVE

Tamarind Cove takes its name from a 300 year old tree rumoured to have been planted over Captain Kidd's buried treasure. The 117 rooms in coral stone are set around intimate courtyards and gardens.

ROYAL WESTMORELAND

Royal Westmoreland resort is the most luxurious development on the island in decades. 350 magnificent homes hidden around the world-class golf course are for sale and rent. Top-class resort facilities around the clubhouse.

ST NICHOLAS ABBEY

St Nicholas Abbey is not an abbey at all. Built in 1650 in Jacobean style, it is the finest plantation house on the island and its owners have lived through Barbados' history. Well worth a visit for the nearby views alone.

CRANE BEACH

Crane Beach is for lovers of wild waves, dramatic scenery and walking along empty sand. Nearby is Foul Bay, equally remote with no sailing, drinking or laundry facilities. Neither is suitable for swimming.

ATLANTIS

The Atlantis submarine takes visitors on an eye-popping trip to the deep where fish live among the coral reefs 150 feet below the waves near Bridgetown. It is comfortable and safe, yet thrilling. Ideal for a family visit.

KENSINGTON OVAL

No cricket enthusiast can miss the Kensington Oval. The scene of feats of legendary batting and bowling, it has the names of icons such as Hall, Sobers, Walcott, Worrell and Weekes commemorated in the stands.

FLOWER FOREST

In the 50 acre Flower Forest, trees and plants flourish wildly and dramatically. Visitors are encouraged to leave the paths to examine the abundance of flora, or just chill out under an African Baobab tree.

HOTELS FACT FILE

Prices with Caribbours (0171-581 3517) are based on two adults sharing and include scheduled flights from Gatwick with British Airways and transfers on the island. High season prices (from mid-December until Easter) at the Sandpiper Inn from £1,692 per person half-board for seven nights. A family with two children under 12, staying for 14 nights half-board in two adjoining rooms would be £2,890 per adult and £2,575 per child. Low season (April to November) at the Sandpiper is £1,301 for seven nights half-board.

Winter prices at Coral Reef Club start at £1,763 per person for seven nights (including breakfast and dinner daily), and from £1,342 in summer (including meals). From July-September, there is a special child price of £528 for seven nights excluding meals. Caribbours offers an extra week free in May, August and September.

High-season holidays at Glitter Bay Hotel for two adults and two children sharing a two-bedroom suite cost £3,198 for the whole group including breakfast and dinner. There are substantial reductions in the April-November period.

Other operators include: BA Holidays (01293 723161), Caribbean Connection (01244 329556) and Kuoni (01306 742222).

© The author was a guest of Caribbours.

A Magical Night at the Opera in Cyprus

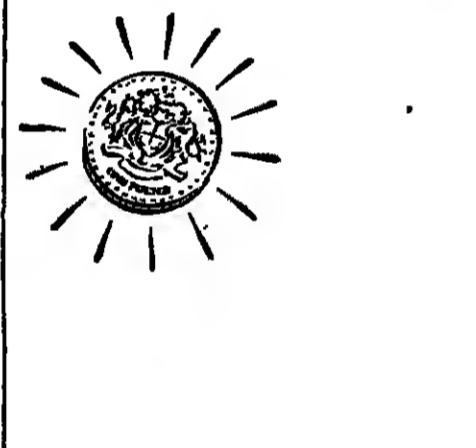
— 21st-28th September 1996

The Annabelle, the most elegant 5-star hotel in Paphos, Cyprus, is offering a Special Opera Package to see a magnificent performance of Verdi's famous Opera "Otello", one of the greatest love stories of all time, by renowned opera producer Rudolph Soussa in the magical setting of the Ancient Paphos Fort.

The Annabelle is located on the beach, offering fine cuisine & excellent leisure facilities. First Class Opera tickets are included in the Package. The Annabelle is featured in all major & specialist tour operator brochures.

For further information, please call Tel: 0181 343 4244.

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Call now or see your travel agent. All fares listed are return from London, may be subject to limited availability and travel periods. Passenger taxes excluded. For details and conditions see ITV Teletext page 380, your travel agent or British Airways Travel Shop.

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Book by 25th September '96.

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if a furball is not ejected by vomiting, it leaves the stomach and travels into the much narrower intestine, where it can

The cat may be suffering from something different, and potentially more serious.

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SPECIAL OFFERS

THE

... inexpensive ways to to make the most of your holiday isle visit and what's on away from the beaches

Tracking tropical bargains

Barbados is determined to avoid the problems of cheap mass tourism laced by many other Caribbean islands. With scheduled flights, including Concorde, full during the peak season the island has so far retained its allure as the most elegant and "British" holiday destination in the West Indies.

Although package holiday prices may not, on average, be as cheap as in, say, the Dominican Republic, there are still some good bargains. Most are in hotels and apartments along the south coast, which the government is attempting to bring up to ever higher standards. But even along the more luxurious west coast to the north of Bridgetown there are some attractive deals on offer.

6 Cheap packages can offer a taste of the real island

The Escape Hotel on Prospect Bay, St James, for example, offers a week's all-inclusive holiday (all meals, unlimited drinks, water sports) and flights with Virgin (01293 617181) from £799 in the summer, rising to £1,929 in the week before Christmas.

Escape has been refurbished and has 42 balconied rooms facing the sea. It prides itself on not being pushy, with no loudspeakers or organised games. Its food, which is mainly Italian, and its beach.

For those wanting less sophisticated accommodation, and who are prepared to cater for themselves, the cheaper packages offered on the south coast can bring a taste of the real Barbados.

Thomson (0990 502399), for example, offers 14 nights self-catering in the St Lawrence apartments near the lively, and noisy, St Lawrence Gap for £515 in May, provided

three people share an apartment. The price rises to a maximum of £1,130 for two people sharing over 21 nights in December. Flights with Britannia are included.

Another hotel Thomson recommends is the small and friendly Pirates Inn, set back off the main road in Hastings, along the coast from Bridgetown. This also costs from £515 for 14 nights self-catering at the cheapest time of the year.

The Casuarina Hotel at St Lawrence Gap has won many awards for its beautiful landscaped gardens and tranquil ambience, despite being near the lively resort. The five apartment blocks have terracotta roofs, which give it a Spanish feeling, and all the rooms are spacious and well furnished. Again, it is self-catering, which is the norm with many of the south coast hotels.

Look out for prices in a wide range of brochures from both big and small tour operators, ranging from about £665 to £1,095 per person, including flights and transfers. Breakfast can be had for an additional £7.90 a day, half-board for an additional £25.90 a day, or seven breakfasts and three dinners for £117.

Virgin offers 14 nights at the Blue Horizon Apartments at Rockley Beach for £699 during June and July, and there is a 75 per cent discount for children under the age of 12. The apartments are close to one of the finest beaches on the island and each room has a balcony, kitchenette and fridge. Flights are with BWIA, non-stop from Heathrow.

The south coast is also the place to find cheap, and cheerful B&Bs, studio apartments or small hotel accommoda-



A balmy Barbados beach with inviting blue seas is worth saving up for, whether on the smart, expensive west coast or cheaper south coast

WHAT TO READ

The publication *Ins and Outs of Barbados* is given away free in the better hotels and contains up-to-date information about hotels, attractions, restaurants, bars and shopping. Other handy publications available locally include *Barbados in a Nutshell*, *Simply Barbados* and *Insight Guide to Barbados*.

Suggested pre-visit guides to read include: *Pocket Barbados* (Fodor Travel Publications, £7.99). *Barbados - a Traveller's Guide* by David Milne (Lacelles, £6.99). *Barbados*, by Peter Hingston (Hingston Associates, £7.50). *Adventure Guide to Barbados* by Harry S. Pariser (Hunter Publishing, £11.95).

Travel Survival Kit to the Eastern Caribbean by Glenda Bendure and Ned Friary (Lonely Planet, £10.95).

Fiction often offers an excellent insight to a place. Try to get a copy of any of the following books.

In the Castle of My Skin by George Lamming (Longman, £6.50), about a poor village boy growing up in colonial Barbados.

The Spoils of Eden by Robert Fowler, describing 17th-century figures and dialogue (out of print, but try secondhand bookshops).

Wide Sargasso Sea by Jean Rhys, exploring the alienation of white Creole West Indians from the post-emancipation West Indian societies (Penguin, £5.99). And by the same writer, though out of print, *Sleep it Off Lady*, a collection of short stories.

tion. The Barbados Tourist Board in Harbour Road, Bridgetown (00 809 4276 2623) provides a comprehensive list.

For £18.75 to £37.40 per room per night, for example, there is the Fairholme Hotel at Maxwell (00 809 423 9425). The Crystal Waters guest house at Worthing (00 809 435 7514) offers good quality accommodation from £22 a night for a double room, and the Sierra Beach Apartments in

Hastings (00 809 429-5620) cost £40 to £47 for a studio. These are particularly attractive to the growing number of people who reach Barbados independently, by yacht, for example, from another Caribbean island.

Some of the 15 small but good quality beachfront properties along the south coast have been brought together by the tourist board under the marketing label "Gems of

Barbados". Some may be rather rundown and most need refurbishment if they are to survive, but already confidence is starting to return.

Among the group is the elegant Ocean View, which was one of the first hotels to be built on the island, the Shangri-La and White Sands, all representing good value at about £27 a night.

HARVEY ELLIOTT

WHAT TO SEE AND WHERE TO EAT

THE SIGHTS

There is more to Barbados than the beaches (see map on facing page). Inland, the roads snake around hills that were once covered in sugar cane. Of the few plantation houses that remain open to the public, St Nicholas Abbey is the best known and worth a visit. Entrance costs about B\$5 (about £1.70). Another is Sunbury Plantation House which, with its museum, was severely damaged by fire last year but has now reopened. Entrance, £3.30.

Tourist coaches head for Harrison's Cave, which is open seven days a week at a cost of £5 per person, £2.50 for children. It is a stunning limestone cavern in which stalactites and stalagmites almost touch and are excitingly lit. Another natural "must" is the Flower Forest, an untamed area of trees and plants reflecting the flora of old Barbados. Entrance £2.

Coaches head, too, for the Mount Gay Rum Centre, where visitors on a £3.30 tour are shown how rum is made. A hire car opens the way to other sights, such as Anthony Eden's hideaway at Villa Nova, now a luxury resort, or the great house of Holders at which Pavarotti will sing next March. These can be seen only from the outside. Cricket fans will enjoy visiting the Kensington Oval, where even if the ground is closed, the museum and shop are open during normal shopping hours. Or try a trip under the sea in the submarine *Atlantis* for about £50 per person.

Crane Beach is wild, remote and rugged. It lies at the bottom of a steep cliff. So many coaches with cruise ship passengers use the nearby hotel facilities, however, the owners now charge an entrance fee of £1.70.

THE FOOD

Eating out is easy, though not cheap. In one of the many shacks, cafes and bars around the island a bottle of local beer costs about £1.70, a tropical cocktail £3, a cola 99p, a tuna salad £4 and a hamburger and chips £5.75.

The fashionable bar now is Bombas Beach Bar and Grill in Paynes Bay (see map on facing page), which is owned and run by a couple, which is the sea. Fathoms in St James specialises in seafood at about £10 to £15 per main course.

Ragamuffins, in Hometown, has one of the liveliest bars, and Olives bar and bistro, also in Hometown, offers excellent service at about £15-£20. Next door at Mews, the Austrian chef Josef Schwaiger has won a reputation for top quality. Expect to pay more than £20 a head here.

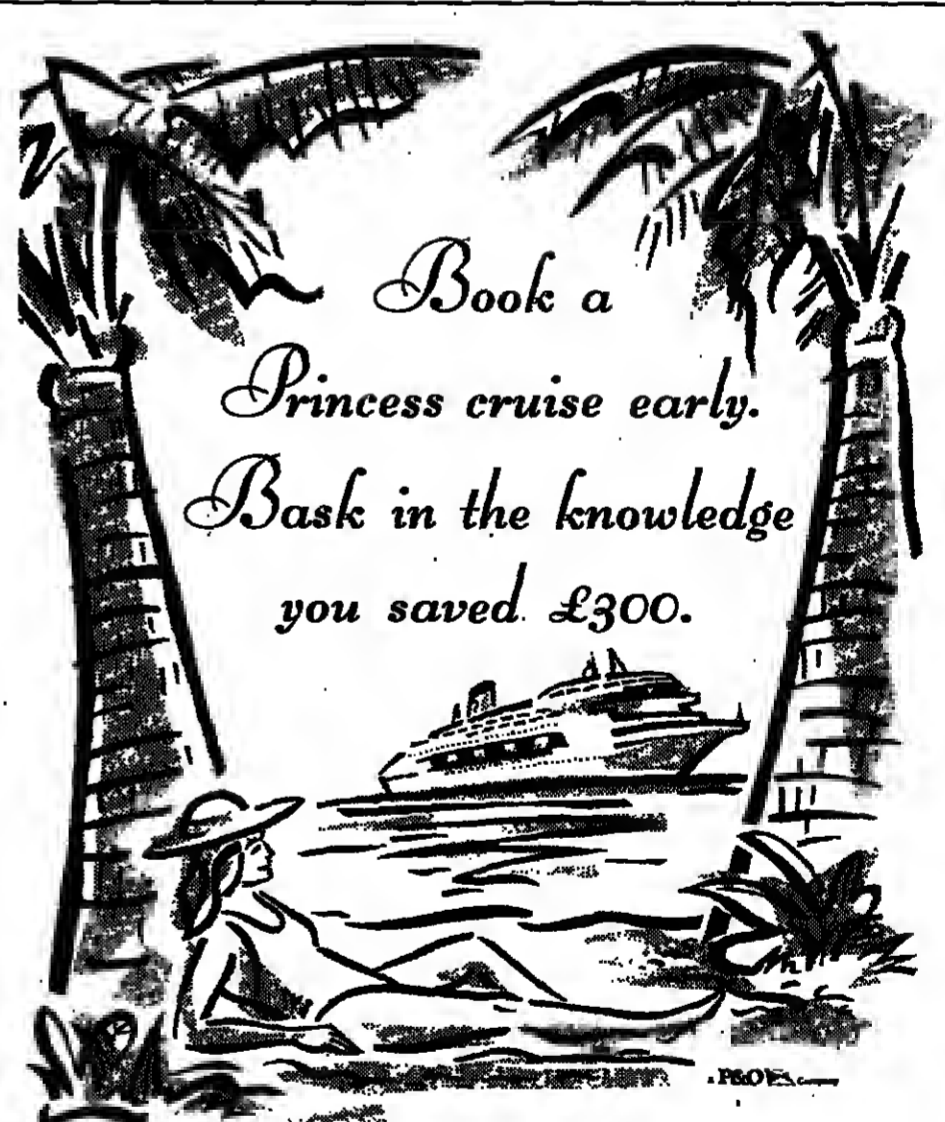
Cane chairs and candles give the award-winning La Maison restaurant at Hometown a romantic feeling. Main courses cost about £25 a head, while Nico's champagne and wine bar burzoes at under £20 for a main course.

At least once on any holiday there is the lure of one big night out, and Barbados has plenty of excellent restaurants. Almost every quality hotel claims to have its own speciality. But for restaurants pure and simple those regarded highly include the Bagatelle Great House, on Highway 2a. It is a restored plantation house, built in 1645, and prices are about twice as much as in the bistros mentioned above. For a splendid view over the sea, the Carambola or the Cliff, both in Derricks, St James, charge about £20 a head for a main course and £10 to £50 for a bottle of wine.

H.E.



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*Indicates that the first 20 places on each of these departures are at a special reduced tariff of £35 pp

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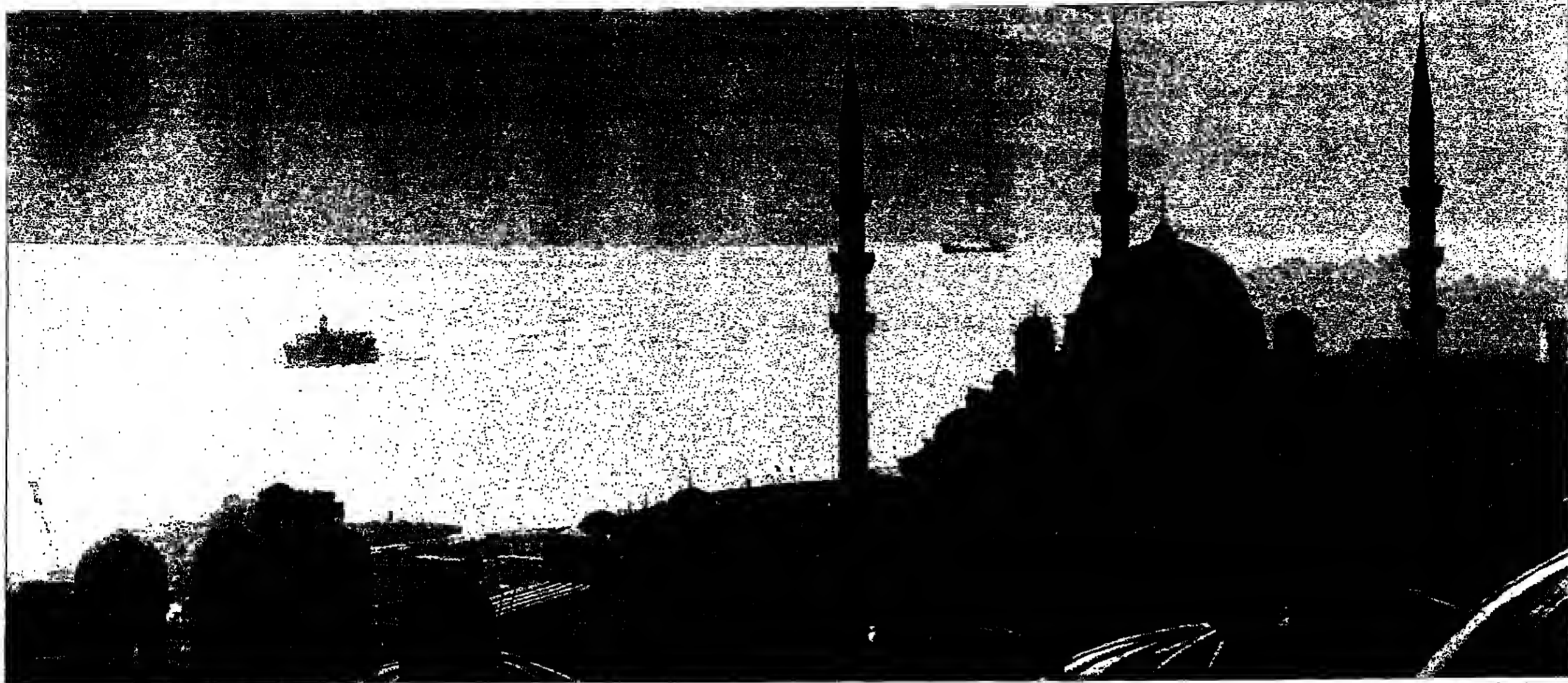
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Istanbul: A ferocious massage, fortune-telling rabbits and splendid mosques make the city unforgettable



Sunrise over the Yenî Cami mosque on the shores of the Bosphorus. Street food is very popular in Istanbul and fishermen in fezzes moor their boats near the mosque to fry their fish over open fires and sell mackerel sandwiches

The Ottoman empire strikes back

One afternoon in Istanbul, I wandered into the Çemberlitas hamam, a Turkish bath designed by the 16th-century Ottoman architect Sinan. From the large reception hall I was shown to a tiny room with a narrow bed. Here I changed into a rough

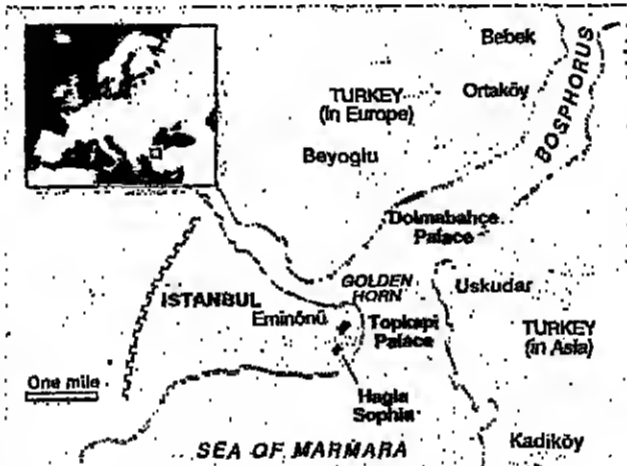
cotton sarong and flip-flops. Feeling pallid and foreign, I was led through an antechamber into the domed steam room (the hararet). On a circular marble slab lay several other customers, like a fishmonger's display. I lay sweating for 15 minutes. Then a burly attendant holding a

mophead and a bucket splashed hot foam all over me and set about some serious mangling, folding me up and twisting me into knots. At one point he stood on me.

I was then hauled into a private chamber where he scrubbed me with a bath mitt. By now I was exhausted but tingling all over. I lay on the slab for a bit longer before being wrapped in several towels and led back upstairs. Now I could understand why there was a bed in the changing-room. After dressing, I had a small shot of Turkish coffee and floated out of the building.

Tied to the quayside at Eminönü, the square that spreads in front of the Yenî Cami mosque on the western bank of the Golden Horn where it meets the Bosphorus, were several small boats on which men wearing fezzes and embroidered aprons. They were frying fish over smoking fires and doing a roaring trade in mackerel sandwiches. Adventurous gluttons will appreciate the street food of Istanbul: kebabs, pretzels, a fortifying glass of boza (a thick, slightly fermented millet drink), a steaming mug of salep (milk flavoured with ground orchid root) or a few morsels of rahat lokum at Ali Muhiddin, the sweetshop where Turkish Delight is said to have been invented.

A good place to buy edible souvenirs is the spice bazaar, behind the Yenî Cami mosque. Less of a tourist trap than the more extensive grand bazaar, this is where the locals shop, haggling among the sacks of cloves and peppercorns. In the grand bazaar I discovered a multilingual fortune-telling rabbit. "Deutsch? English?" asked its owner, producing a board, bristling with folded scraps of paper, and showing it to the rabbit who, as far as I could tell, did very little. The man, receiving



some telepathic signal from the rabbit, picked a scrap from the board and intoned: "Generally this day passes with happiness. Appropriate the pleasures of reading."

When the Emperor Justinian decided to build the greatest church in Christendom, the Hagia Sophia ("Divine Wisdom"), he commissioned the mathematicians Anthemius and Sidorus as his architects. The basilica is the grandest monument of the Byzantine empire, its most remarkable

feature a dome, 100ft in diameter, built with 40 stone ribs and ringed with 40 windows. It was an extraordinary feat of engineering in the sixth century - it is 1,160 years older than St Paul's.

The basilica was dedicated on December 26, 537 and served as the cathedral of Constantinople until the Ottoman conquest of 1453. Then it was turned into a mosque; four minarets were added, as well as an elegant Islamic library. Today, Hagia Sophia is a museum. The guide claimed that the great entrance doors were made of wood from Noah's Ark. A queue formed to touch St Gregory's column, reputed to prevent blindness and promote fertility. A spacious gallery runs about the interior, decorated with mosaics. One depicts Christ flanked by the Empress Zoe and her third husband, Constantine IX.

The empress was an unfortunate woman. A spinster in her late forties when she was crowned, she was hastily married to a doddering senator, Romanus Argurus. There were no children. Zoe, besotted with a beautiful pageboy 40 years her junior, had Romanus poisoned and married the boy in 1034. He was crowned the Emperor Michael

IV and died seven years later an obese epileptic.

The empress was then persuaded to adopt his cousin, who was crowned Michael V - and had his adoptive mother locked away. His reign, however, proved unpopular and within a year he was deposed and blinded.

Zoe was released to rule jointly with her sister Theodora. The "Two Mamas" were a much-loved double act. She married a third time, aged 64. Constantine IX openly kept a mistress but Zoe didn't seem to mind, and died peacefully six years later.

In the grounds of the Hagia Sophia there is a small outbuilding, originally the baptistry of the basilica, used by the Ottomans first as a lampstore, then as a mausoleum for two 17th-century sultans, Mustafa I and Ibrahim. Mustafa was barely educated. He sat on the throne unwillingly, all too aware of the frailty of power, and spent his brief reign fearing for his life. He was soon removed.

Ibrahim, a flamboyant figure, sometimes took 24 concu-

bines in one session. His favourite, a fat Armenian girl who was called Sugar Lump, was appointed the governor of Damascus.

Just before Ibrahim was strangled, he announced his plan to line the entire Topkapı Palace with fur. The palace is huge. Started in 1461, shortly after the Ottoman conquest, it was altered and extended continuously for four centuries. Since 1924 it has been a museum, or rather a whole complex of museums so exhaustive that it would take several days to do them justice.

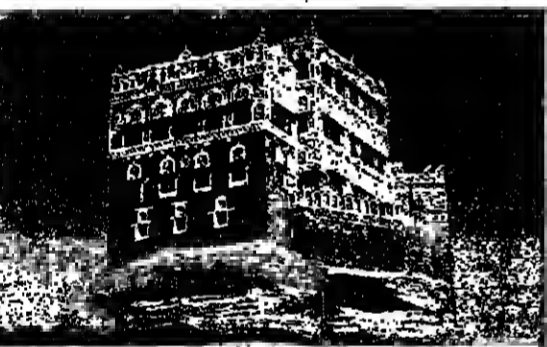
There was one afternoon and toured the harem, which was always a separate complex within the palace, containing more than 250 rooms, even a small hospital. The dozen or so rooms one can visit are highly decorative, all covered with brightly-patterned faience tiles. The 400 women who once lived there were guarded by the black eunuchs, gargantuan Africans selected for their ugliness so that they would terrify rather than charm their charges. The harem had a

strict hierarchy. The most powerful figure was the valide, the mother of the reigning sovereign, whose influence on cultural and political life was enormous. The valide was responsible for selecting the haseki, the sultan's lover. Should one of the haseki become pregnant and bear a son, she was allowed to marry the sultan and move into the more comfortable chambers allocated to the official wives.

Because a number of the official wives stood a chance of becoming the next valide, an atmosphere of rivalry and intrigue pervaded the entire palace. The sultan reigned only at the pleasure of his ministers and guards; if he displeased, he was removed and replaced with one of his half-brothers. When the long-abandoned palace was being converted into a museum, there were still a few concubines living in the harem, very old women with nowhere else to go.

JOE ROBERTS

The author was a guest of Dolunay Holidays.



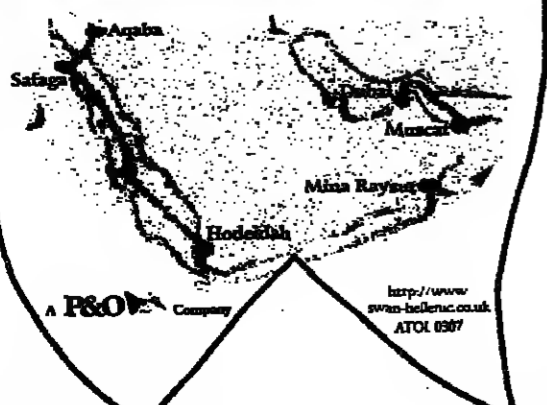
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ISTANBUL FACT FILE

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Table with columns for departure dates (1996 Nov 14, Dec 19, 1997 Mar 30, Apr 6, 20, Apr 27, May 11, 18, 25, Jun 8, Jun 20, Jul 20, Aug 10, 17, Sep 7, Sep 14, 21, Oct 5, 12, Oct 19, Oct 26, Nov 9, Nov 21) and prices. Includes a section for 'For tours of China, talk to the experts, we're at home in the Orient.' and contact information for China Travel Service (UK) Ltd.

Rain to... Y... different, and potentially more serious.

Britain: Next weekend more than 1,500 historic buildings open their doors to the public for free

Railway hotel fit to be a palace

You could call it the best day out in history. Two days, in fact. Next weekend Heritage Open Days offers free admission to 1,500 properties old and new. In London alone, more than 350 buildings will be open for viewing.

Up and down the country, owners have responded magnificently to the call to open their doors, from the Prince of Wales and Richard Branson to the Church, the military, the TUC, the Grosvenor Estate, the BBC, ITV and Channel 4, the College of Arms, Barts hospital and even Vatman.

The one body to adopt a dog-in-the-manger attitude is Her Majesty's Government, which is all the more surprising because Heritage Open Days is sponsored by Virginia Bottomley's Department of National Heritage.

In London, people are denied the opportunity to see the spectacular restoration of the Foreign Office. Only the old Treasury building is open in Whitehall (the remains of Henry VII's palace).

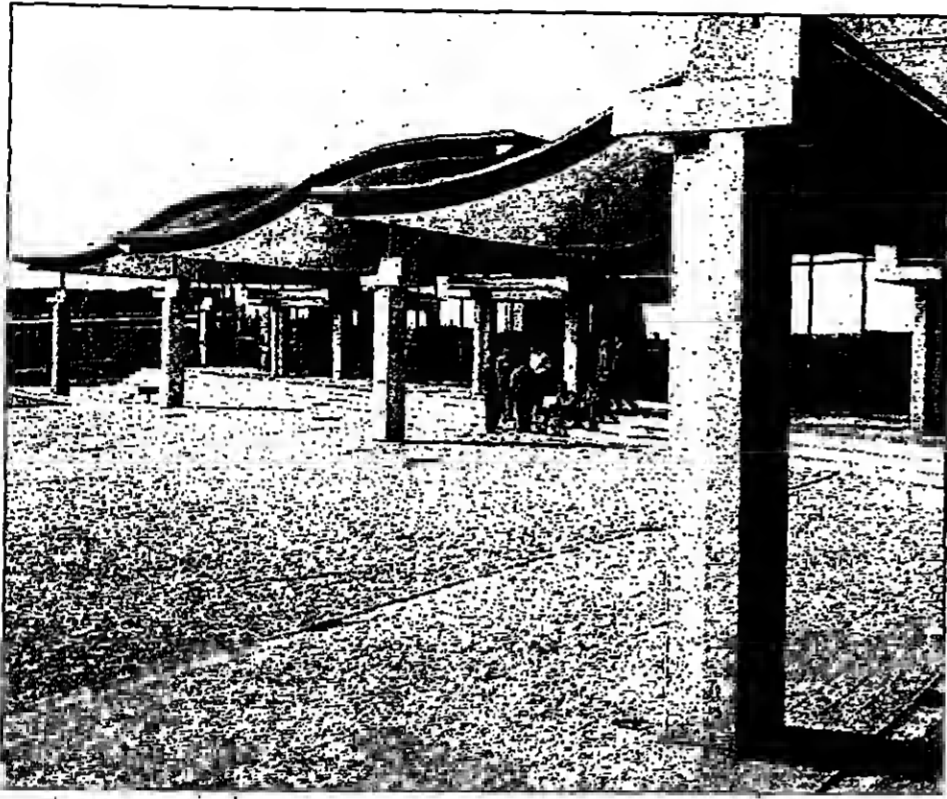
However, in Nottingham you can inspect Sir Michael Hopkins's civilised, cool and airy new offices for the Inland Revenue. In Leeds there is access to the "stunning" headquarters of the National Health Service, Quarry House — though it's not the quality that stuns so much as the Stalinesque, wedding-cake opulence and size. Japanese gardens and indoor swimming pool included (not for the customers' use, of course).

To make the most of the open days you can concentrate on a town, city or London borough, or map out your own itinerary based on the theme of your choice — new architecture, enterprising restoration, churches, cinemas, Georgian or Arts and Crafts buildings.

Top of the list must be Sir Gilbert Scott's splendid and long-empty Midland Hotel in front of St Pancras station in London. The interior is the Victorian counterpart of the Field of the Cloth of Gold, full of romance, vibrant colour and encrusted ornament. The focal point is the stupendous grand stair, twin flights circling the walls emerging to make a death-defying leap across space. Now that internal restoration is half-complete you can see what it could be — a place as palatial as the House of Lords.

In Manchester, the North West Film Archive, housed in a converted canal-side warehouse, will be open for the first time, with tours of the vaults, film screenings and demos of film repair.

At Bournemouth, Dorset, there is a chance to see romantic Highcliffe castle under repair at last. It incorporates substantial chunks of medieval French buildings brought back in the diplomatic



Richard MacCormac's award-winning Cable and Wireless College at Coventry

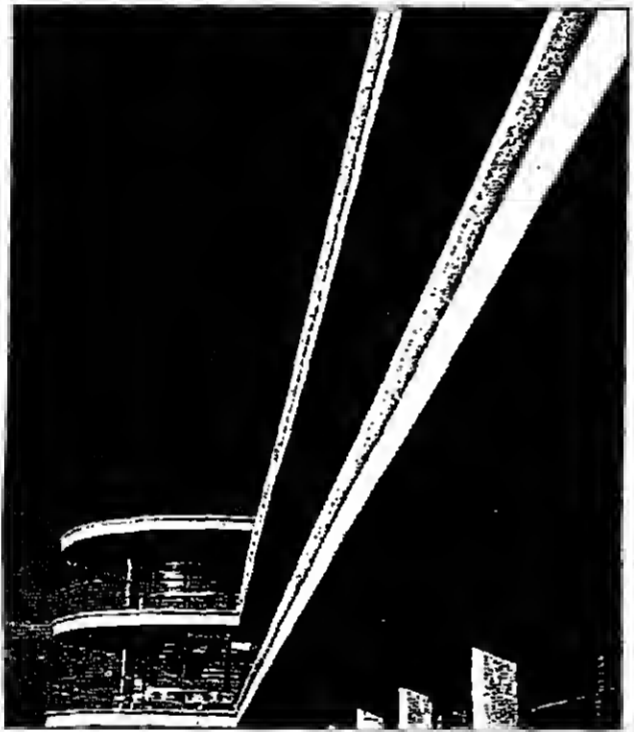
bag by a resourceful British ambassador. Perched on a cliff above the sea, Highcliffe has a Great Hall modelled on King's College Chapel, Cambridge. This is the age of the Picturesque, all gables, buttresses and pinnacles and an abhorrence of symmetry.

In Birmingham, the Venetian/Gothic-style College of Art, dating from 1894, is open after two years of refurbishment. By contrast, a fine building that may soon need a new use is James Wyatt's Royal Military Academy of 1805 at Woolwich, London. This is the capital's counterpart to an Oxford or Cambridge college, set amid lawns, with mellow brick buildings laid around quads and along secluded lanes.

In north London, the Castle Climbing Centre is ingeniously housed in a former pumping station disguised as a castellated folly to appease affluent Victorians living nearby. It looked the ultimate white elephant until the promoters realised they could turn the deep turbine pits to advantage, creating an 80ft climbing wall within.

If your taste is for the unusual, try the Williamson Galleries in Liverpool, where there are guided tours through a labyrinth of underground tunnels and chambers, excavated by a local philanthropist to create work during the depression after Waterloo. There is a 40ft-high banquet hall and complete houses hollowed out from the rock — only recently have local campaigners begun to explore and clear out the tunnels.

Serious moles can follow up this visit with one to the



De La Warr Pavilion and Marina at Bexhill-on-Sea, Sussex

underground temple, complete with "church" and Roman altar, in the grounds of long-demolished Hagley Hall in Staffordshire.

Georgian buildings are well represented. There is the Crown Court in York castle, built by the masterly John Carr of York, which offers a tour of the cells, the high sheriff's dining room and two domed courts. Or a grand tour of Buxton Spa, Derbyshire, where the Crescent contains a first-floor assembly room with plasterwork as rich and exquisite as any by Robert Adam.

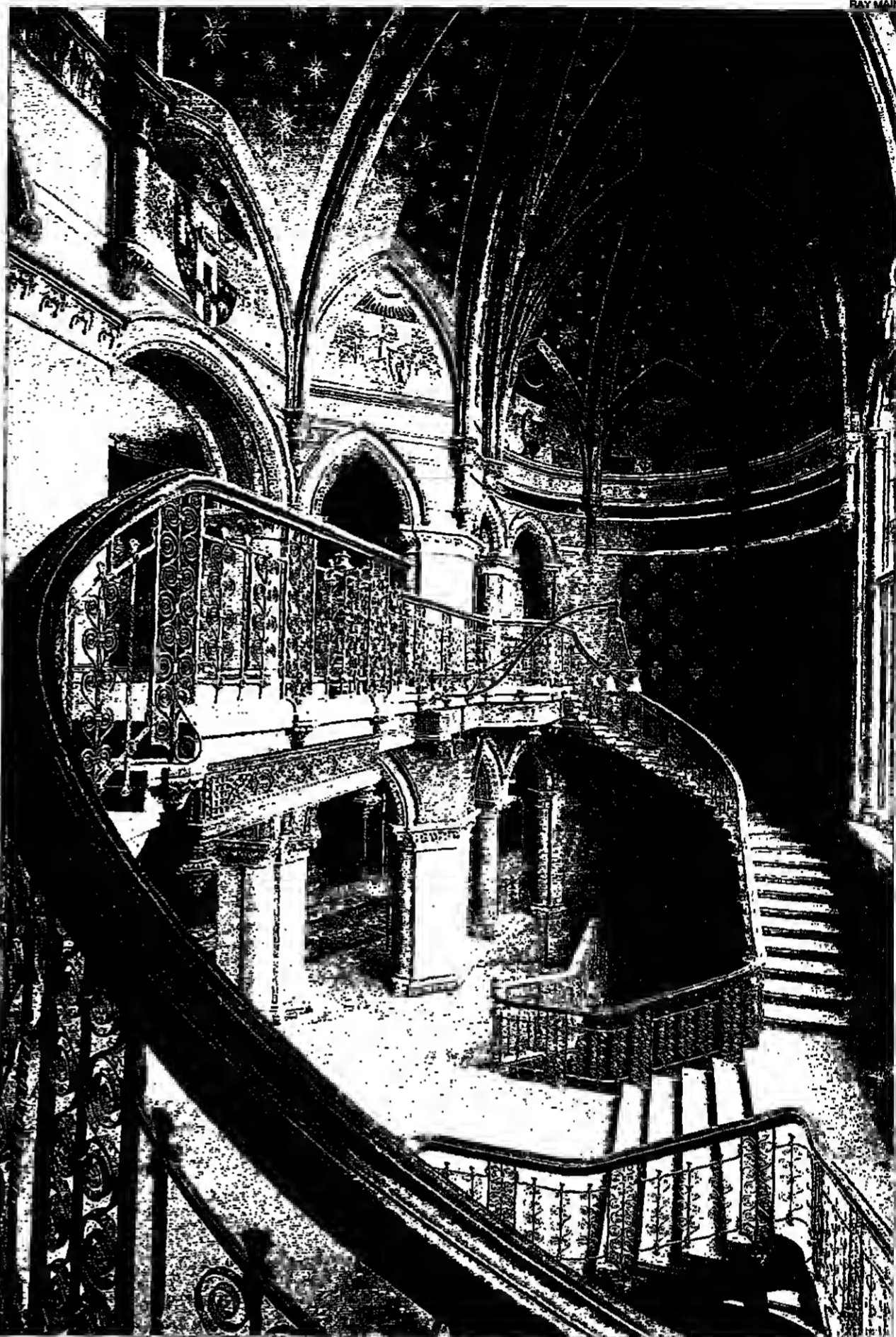
There's also a chance to view the marble-lined pump room, where fashionable Edwardi-

ans came to take the waters. In south London, seize the chance to see the Carshalton House water tower, built for a director of the South Sea Bubble company, with plunge bath and Delft tiles.

Opening at Aldershot, Hampshire, is the military library founded by the Prince Consort in 1860 and designed by Captain Francis Fowke, engineer-architect of the remarkable early buildings at the V&A museum in London. Or there's the Royal Military School of Music at Kneller Hall, Twickenham.

For Arts and Crafts interiors, try Pownall Hall, Wiltshire, Cheshire, built for a local brewer with De Morgan tiles and painted ceilings. There's also a chance to see the Gertrude Jekyll gardens at Ampthorp House, Andover, Hampshire, now used to train chaplains in the armed forces.

From the 1930s there is the modernist house designed for the headmaster of Dartington school in Devon, with works by Epstein, Fry, Nash, Piper and Nicholson. Or the London Taxi Centre, at 7-11 Herbrand Street, WC1, a multilevel garage built for Daimler Car Hire in 1930 by Wallis Gilbert (architect of the old Hoover factory) in Art Deco style. In Sussex, there is the modernist De La Warr Pavilion and



Going up in architectural annals, the twin stairs at the Midland Hotel, St Pancras, London, now being restored

Marina at Bexhill. Modernist icons include the Renault Distribution Centre at Swindon, Wiltshire, by Sir Norman Foster (with a selection of classic Renaults on show), and the impressive David Mellor Cottery Factory at Hathersage, near Sheffield, which takes its circular form from the gasometer which once stood on the site.

Award-winning new buildings include Richard MacCormac's Cable and Wireless College at Coventry.

To be up to the minute, sample a new family house "in an Arts and Crafts style", nearing completion in Cleve Place, Chelsea, London. Book through the architect James Gorst on 0171-831 8300. For trad at its most stylish, visit the Duchy of Cornwall office in Buckingham Gate, London.

Several recently completed City offices are on show, including Minster Court (dubbed Monster Court by modernists on account of its Gothic gables) and Vintners Place, with marble floors in outrageous imitation of St Peter's in Rome.

There are many reasons for visiting churches. The funeral in *Four Weddings and a Funeral* was filmed at St Clement's, West Thurrock, Essex. At St Ives, Cornwall, you can look into the chapel on the 15th-century bridge, used in times past as a tollhouse and a pub, but now empty. At Highnam, near Gloucester, the remarkable frescoes by Thomas Gambier Parry — an inspiration to the pre-Raphaelites — are on view, to a background of organ recitals.

Theatres and cinemas make a strong showing. The opulent Victorian theatre at Normansfield mental hospital at Teddington, Middlesex, was built for Dr John Langdon Down, who identified Down's syndrome. His family were keen on amateur theatrics and he noticed that many of his patients had a talent for mimicry and used theatre as a form of therapy. In central London, the Art Deco interiors of the Savoy theatre, restored after a fire, are on view.

For new technology, there is

the 1876 Tyme Swing Bridge at Newcastle upon Tyne, or tour the bridge and engine room of the motor vessel Tern on Lake Windermere, Cumbria. In south Wales, the Nantyglo Round House Towers, built by ironmasters as a defence against riots, are open.

Wales offers about 50 properties for viewing. Scotland

500. Northern Ireland offers not buildings but a series of 11 maritime tours leading to piers that serviced old monasteries, fish traps, tide mills, lighthouses and lightships. And best of all these open days, from Penzance to John o'Groat's, are all free.

MARCUS BINNEY

For a copy of England: Heritage Open Days 1996, call 0891 800603.
For further information on Heritage Open Days contact: London — Open House 96, 0891 8001061, Scotland — Doors Open Days, 0141 221 1466, Wales — European Heritage Open Days, 01222 484060, Northern Ireland — European Heritage Days, 01232 235254.

WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 25

ELECTUARY

(b) A medicine that is licked up, as distinct from being eaten, drunk, inhaled, injected, inserted as a suppository or absorbed. Usually made by incorporating the medicinal ingredient in a doughy or pasty mass. "And now, ladies and gentlemen, the speaker you have all been waiting for — our own local Member, whom I am sure you will welcome as befits your chosen... er... electuary."

TENERIFIC

(c) Making tenebrous, ie dark and obscure. From the Latin *tenebrae* shadows, *tenebrus*

shadowy + *fic*, participle stem of *facere* to make. "Golly, Professor, your lectures are tenebrific. No really, we all think so, simply and siltily tenebrific."

FLAGITIOUS

(a) Atrocious, heinous, appallingly wicked. For use when *facinorous* is insufficiently strong. "Since you ask, Headmaster, I think your address to the Governing Body was inspiringly flagitious."

PIGSNEY

(c) Believe it or not, a term of endearment used when addressing a female. The Saxoo word for girl. Try it on your friend: "Come, my little pigsnay..."

A Special Announcement

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In November we shall commence the first of our flight series from London Gatwick to Harare (Salisbury), Zimbabwe, for the magnificent Victoria Falls. Here the weary traveller will find accommodations and sights that not only surpass that of other areas but probably offer a greater sense of "being" than anywhere else on earth.

Not surprisingly David Livingstone, when he stumbled across the Falls in 1855, remarked that "sights so lovely must have been created on by angels in their flight". The Victoria Falls is a marvellous place both to relax in a temperate climate and to use as a base from which to explore with visits to the Falls themselves, the nearby town of Victoria Falls, a Zambezi cruise, local and regional game viewing and much besides.

On a selected number of departures we are making available just 24 seats at the special tariff of between £495 and £595 for a 7-night stay at the



DEPARTURE DATES & PRICES

Tuesdays - per person in a twin
1996 November 5, 12, 19, 26 - £515
December 3, 10, 17 - £495
December 24, 31 - £595
1997 January 7, 14, 21, 28 - £530
February 4, 11, 18, 25 - £545
Single room supplement - £160
(Single twin share - £50)

Tariff includes: return flights, 7 night accommodation on a bed and breakfast basis, services of a local host. Not included: travel insurance, airport taxes, main meals, optional excursion programme tipping. All prices are subject to change. All bookings are accepted subject to our Conditions of Booking, available on request.

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To make your reservation. For a brochure quoting TDM/V7.



For new technology, there is

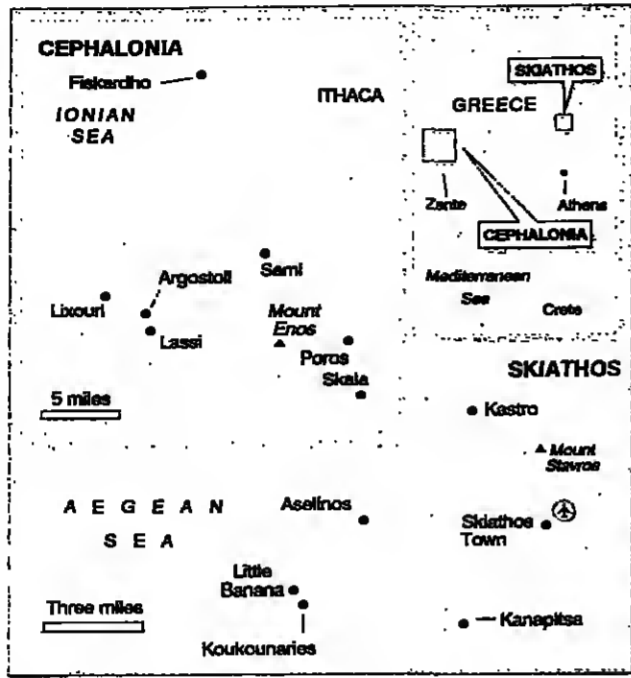
Greek islands: You can still find a beach to yourself on Skiathos; and turtles on Cephalonia and Zante

Have boat will find true heaven

Arriving may be fun but travelling is a frightful business. We surveyed our fellow travellers at Gatwick with dismay. Middle-aged men wore Newcastle United shirts, ear-rings, hair *en brosse* or back-to-front baseball caps.

At satellite 31, where we went to board our flight to Skiathos, I was relieved to see people in clothes appropriate to their ages, reading proper books without gold-blocked letters on the front.

Skiathos, the busiest of the Sporades, is a lovely little place, only eight miles long and three wide. In high season it's crowded with Italians and Germans but by early September they have gone, taking their video cameras with them, and good riddance, so September and October is a good time to visit.



In spring we had a tiny beach to ourselves virtually every day. I'm not prepared, however, to say how to find it, in case I go back.

It's best to stay on the south coast but to travel into town for dinner or shopping and hike into the hills for history and olive groves — although how the landscape stays so green with temperatures around 100F is a mystery.

The island has more than 60 beaches, among them Vromolimnos for the young and single. Koukounaries for families and the nudist beach on the western tip, disconcertingly called Little Banana.

On the north coast is Lalaria, a pebble beach visited by big boats, but the best way to find a fantastic beach is to hire your own boat, potter up the coast and moor at one of the many coves inaccessible by road — there are several along the Kanapitsa peninsula, where the Onassis family home is. Take bottles of wine in a coolbox, a parasol and snorkel and you'll think you've died and gone to heaven.

Car hire is expensive on all Greek islands. We paid £117 for a 4WD for three days, but it is essential to explore inland. Buses to town are frequent but crowded; you will probably have to stand in early evening when everyone goes into town for dinner. Mopeds are cheap but only for the tired of living — we saw many tourists with arms or legs in plaster and hideous calf burns from exhaust pipes. Ordinary saloon

cars are available but they would be a nightmare on mountain roads which are riddled with potholes. The island council keeps them that way to dissuade coach tours, and you can't blame them.

If you're feeling energetic, visit Kastro, the medieval capital of Skiathos, which was deserted in 1829, although no one seemed to know why. It was a Bravo Two Zero hike from where we left the car but the views were spectacular. It stands at the top of a 200-metre cliff and the ruins of the Byzantine church and houses inhabited only by birds makes the place eerie.

From here it is a short, shuddering drive to Prof Elias for lunch with a view and on to the Evangelistria Monastery, near Mount Stavros. The frescoes are splendid and the rooms inexpensive, but steer clear of the monastery keeper (thick set, dark haired), who is rude to the point of barminess.

For some reason Skiathos town, where the whole world seems to go for dinner, is full of attractive young women wandering about in big groups and small skirts — great for a young man but distressing if you're a thirtysomething in last summer's frocks with every stitch on duty.

The town is pretty for an appetit along the front but the best value restaurants are in the cobbled backstreets. Look

for the Mediterraneo on a roof-terrace which offers food as good as the view. Don't expect the food to be piping hot — the Greeks believe it's bad for the digestion. When you're tired of eating Greek, head for the Garden of the East, an open-air Chinese restaurant. For the best pizzas go south to Peligiari, on the beach.

The best restaurant on the island is The Windmill, restored by a British couple and a sort of Langens in the Aegean. The food is faultless. Ask for "the best table in Skiathos" — a balcony for two straight out of a Restoration drama, where you can look across the town and marina. Book when the plane lands.

The island is not perfect. Many restaurants do not take credit cards, the food's too cold and the wine's too warm and some of the waiters could do with a spell in the charm school. The food is better in Crete or, now I think of it, in the Lemonia in Primrose Hill, NW3, but then I'm a grumpy old thing when it comes to travel and have a list of places I shall never visit, including Florida and Los Angeles. And yet I liked Skiathos very much, wouldn't mind having a little place there actually. Best to go soon, before the back-to-front baseball caps get there.

MARY GOLD

Where tourism turned turtle

THE ECO-TOURIST is fast becoming a main economic force on the island of Zante. This year hoteliers report a 30 per cent drop in bookings. Indeed, all the islands are being out-competed by lower prices in Turkey. To compensate for their losses, the Greeks are turning to the conservationists.

The Sea Turtle Protection Society of Greece has campaigned for 13 years to save the Loggerhead turtle, *Caretta caretta*, which has many nesting beaches on Zante. However, volunteers telling tourists not to walk on protected beaches at night and not to plant parasols in the sand do not carry favour with those trying to lure sun seekers.

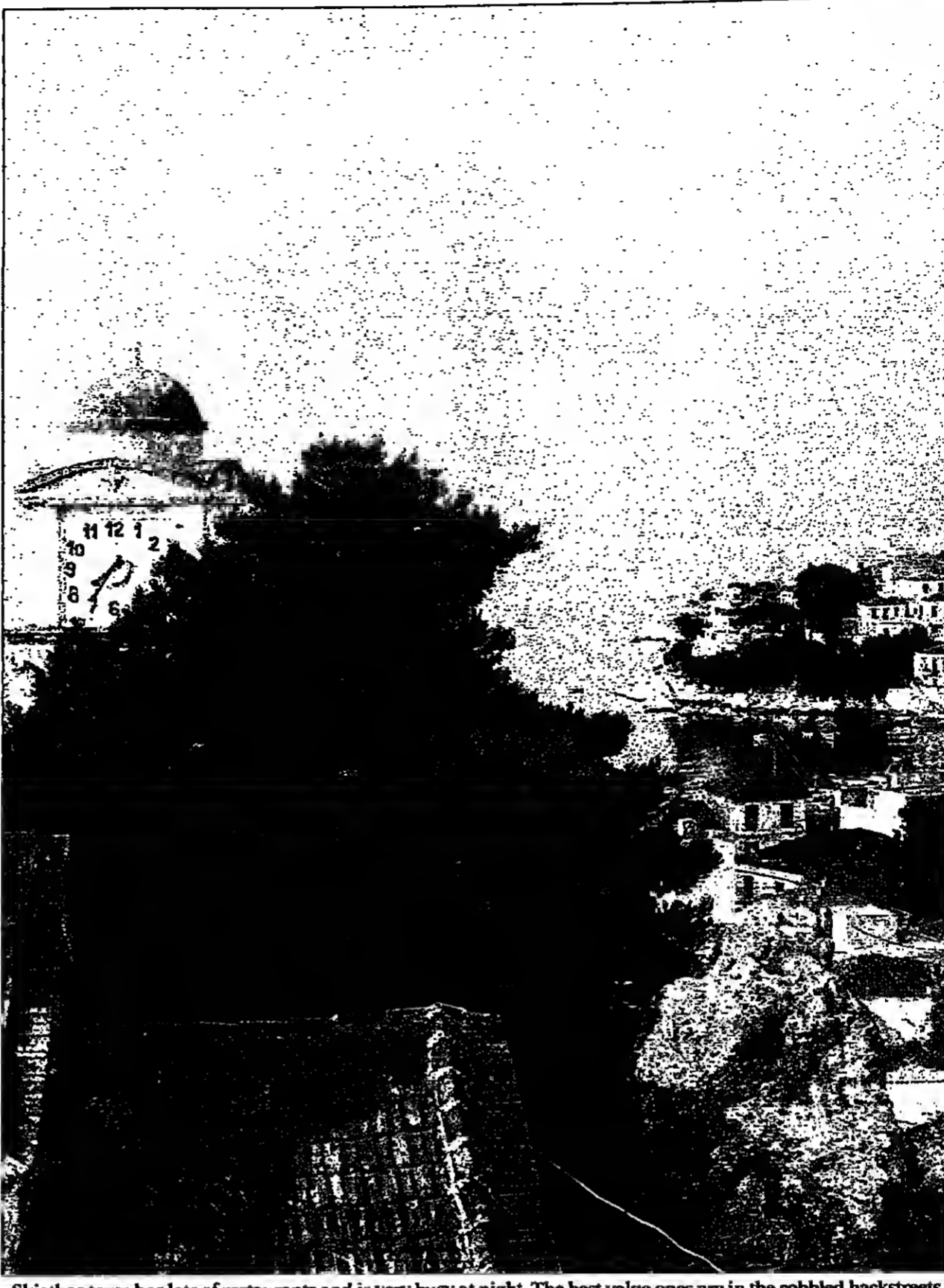
The solution is to entice turtle fans. The local people are capitalising on Crete and turtle-spotting boats leave hourly from the beach at Laganas. What they don't tell people is that by snorkelling off Kalamaki during the nesting season (May to August), it is often possible to swim with these majestic beasts.

The real treat is the hatchlings which start their desperate scramble for the sea at the end of July. It is virtually impossible to see the hatchlings at present, if you are merely an eco-tourist. The best you can hope for are the tiny tracks down the beach.

Eco-tourism on Zante still has a long way to go: legislation preventing construction behind beaches does not compensate landowners and only people with an official permit can get close to the turtles, unless they happen to see an adult in the sea.

Environmentalists are campaigning for a marine park on Zante which will allow controlled, but a much wider, viewing of the turtles. For effective eco-tourism people must see, but not necessarily touch, what they are saving.

JENNIFER D'ANDREA



Skiathos town has lots of restaurants and is very busy at night. The best value ones are in the cobbled backstreets



Hire a boat on Skiathos

First Choice Holidays (0161-745 7000) offers a week at the Skiathos Palace from £525, per person, including breakfast in high season. £419 in low season, based on flights from Gatwick.

Avis (Skiathos 21458) offers saloon cars from about £32 a day and 4WDs for £44 (there are discounts for First Choice clients).

Eating out: Taverna Stavros, Evangelistria Street, is good value. The Windmill (21223); Gardeo of the East (21627); for out-of-town Chinese try The Chinese Garden in Troulos village (49219). Expect to pay £15 for

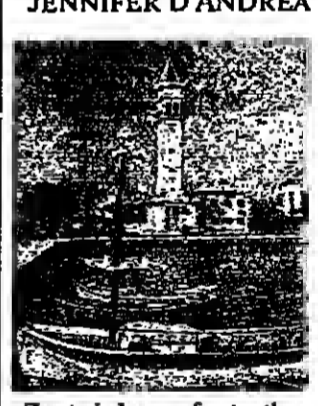
FACT FILE

lunch, £30 for dinner for two with wine, more at The Windmill.

Best places for shopping: Archipelagos, near the Papadiamantis Museum, for Greek folk art and antiques, looms from the Evangelistria Monastery.

Skiathos is a good base for island-hopping. Skopelos is 15 minutes away by hydrofoil (about £10). Alonissos is another hour by boat from Skopelos, check for times.

Further information from the National Tourist Office of Greece, 4 Conduit Street, London W1 (0171-734 5997).



Zante is haven for turtles

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Sat	19th Oct	At sea	-	-	-
Sun	20th Oct	Alexandria, Egypt	0700	0800	*Cairo & the Pyramids (Embark passengers)
Mon	21st Oct	Port Said, Egypt	2000	2100	*Lower Galilee
		Ashdod, Israel	0700	-	*Masada & Dead Sea
Tue	22nd Oct	Ashdod, Israel	-	1900	*Jerusalem & Bethlehem
Wed	23rd Oct	Limassol, Cyprus	0900	1300	Optional Curium & Kolossi
Thu	24th Oct	Rhodes	0800	1300	Optional Lindos
Fri	25th Oct	Piraeus, Greece	0800	-	*Athens City en route to airport

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Outside 2 bed	7/A	£1045
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How to Book: To provisionally hold a cabin, without obligation, call us on 01293 433030. We will send you a brochure containing booking conditions and a booking form which should be completed and returned to us with your payment within 5 days. We are open Mon-Fri 9am - 5.30pm, Sat 10am - 4pm and Sun 10am - 1pm.

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How green was my valley

I am a package holiday convert. This is a recent development, to use the language of the holiday brochure. Before my conversion, it seemed to me that a package holiday was the keener expression of being a holiday patient, and the uniformed rep was like a nurse, telling her charges not to drink the local water. But now I want someone to look after me.

Just as hardened atheists turn to religion to give their lives some comfort and form in a troubled world, I found myself turning to Lunn Poly, 'The Holiday Shop', for the same reasons. My choice of holiday was an accident. Flicking through the Thomson Simply Greece brochure, the page fell open on the small village of Katochos in Cephalonia, apparently a good choice for "keen walkers and birdwatchers". While I do not consider this to be an accurate character profile, it did at least signal a lack of karaoke bars, and I booked a seven-day break in a self-catering studio.

In the dark days when I had not let a holiday world that is packaged and sanitised into my heart, I used to sneer at the amount of luggage people heaved on to airport weighing machines. Now it is I who keep young romantics waiting. They shuffle their flip-flopped feet impatiently while I check in my baby's travel cot — and then, to top it all, I have a row with the woman at the check-in desk. She tells me that even though I have paid a full air fare for my two-year-old, she will have to sit at the front of the plane while I sit at the back. Apparently there are no more seats together. Airport rage broke out. Computers crashed. Supervisors were called and a solution was found. However, I would like to suggest to all airlines that a two, three or four-year-old is really still an infant, as are many 35-year-olds, but that is not the airline's fault.

Never mind. Three hours later, all of us Thomson Package Citizens were blinking in the spring sunlight of Cephalonia. The largest of the Ionian islands, Cephalonia used to attract mostly Greeks and Italians. Now that the British package industry is on the case, a new airport terminal has been built. At first sight, the capital, Lixouri, was a disappointment. It is a much narrower, intestine, where it can

walk down to the beach, I passed orchards brimming with wild flowers, two supermarkets, an ice-cream parlour and a few village houses with colourful potted blooms and those small jumpy canaries in cages. Perhaps that's what the brochure meant by birdwatching.

Here, about six tavernas overlook the bay, the best of which is Elliniko, where you can sip the delicious, honey-coloured local wine, Rombola, and watch white ducks chase each other across the sand and silver seaweed. And that's it. In the low season, the joint isn't exactly jumping.

On the other hand, if you want a more populated resort you can take a two-hour walk across the cliffs to Skala, past Potomakia beach, where the loggerhead turtles come ashore to lay their eggs between June and August. Skala, with its pine-fringed beaches and handy car hire opportunities (public transport is very poor on the island) is supposed to have some lively music bars, but is still fairly sleepy as resorts go.

Not for much longer though. I suspect Katochos is a dress rehearsal for the final production. Even in May, sun loungers and umbrellas mysteriously appeared on the main stretch of beach, like a sub plot from *The X-Files*.

From time to time, you hear teams of builders tapping away at those ghost-like concrete structures that will eventually become studios.

That said, in late spring when the wild flowers are blooming in the green hills and valleys, the beaches are uncrowded and the prices haven't become ridiculous, it is an ideal destination for those who want a genuinely peaceful, rural holiday.

And I would just like to say how much I appreciated watching Freddie Starr chop Peter Stringfellow in half of the in-flight film home.

DEBORAH LEVY

Thomson (reservations, 0171-707 9000) offers holidays in Cephalonia in October from £209 for 14 nights self-catering at Lassi (flying from Luton) to £638 half board at the Hotel White Rocks in Lassi (from Gatwick). There is also 14 nights half board at the Hotel Irinna in Svoronata for

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JILL CRAWSHAW'S INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL TIPS

Going flat out

CYCLING is becoming the environmentally acceptable form of holiday transport. Bike Tours (01225 480130) offers an Amsterdam weekend break on September 20-24 (taking your own bike), crossing between Harwich and the Hook of Holland.

Soft pedalling

IN FRANCE, cycling for Softies (0161-248 8282) offers individual holidays including a week along the little-known rivers and canals of La Venise Vert, from £737 (two sharing) including flights, seven nights half-board accommodation and cycle hire.

In top gear

THERE'S a chance to join Oxfam (01865 312456) next spring on a week-long tour in Israel, cycling 40-60 miles a day. If you can raise £1,850 sponsorship (they'll advise how), you'll pay a maximum fee of £250, covering flights, accommodation and cycle hire.

Tiepolo tour

THE tercentenary of the birth of Tiepolo is being celebrated in Venice by a major exhibition of his works. Martin Randall (0181-742 3355) offers a four-night tour in October, escorted by guest lecturer Dr Joachim Strupp.

Pastures new

THE Gites d'Includes brochure from Britany Ferries (0990 360360) offers short breaks in rural self-catering cottages, all within easy reach of Caen, Cherbourg, St Malo and Roscoff. Three



Travellers must take their own bikes for a cycling tour of Holland, from £150. Guides and mechanics are included in the price

nights in a half-timbered country house in Normandy, less than five miles from Beroy, with two bedrooms and a garden with barbecue, and return ferry crossing between Poole and Cherbourg for car and four passengers costs £213 during October and November.

In the picture

YOU CAN capture North Africa's oases and desert landscapes, orange groves and the alleys of the Medina on canvas. On Panorama's (01273 220013) watercolour painting holiday in Tunisia next spring, artist Muriel Owen leads a two-week trip to Hammamet, Sidi Bou Said - the little blue and white gem near Carthage - the maritime oasis of Gabes, and Douz, the gateway to the Sahara. The April trip costs £646 half-board. A painting week in northern Mallorca this November at the Illa D'Or hotel at Puerto Pollensa costs £449.

Howzat?

MASOCHIST cricket addicts still prepared to watch England can head for New Zealand from February 2-22, 1997 on a 17-night Sports Abroad trip (01306 744345) to watch the second Test at Wellington, the third and one-day match at Christchurch.

For light relief, there are stays at the fishing port of Picton and at Kaikoura and seven nights in Wellington and eight in Christchurch. The price per person (two sharing) is £2,295, plus about £48 for tickets to each Test match and £22 for the one-day game. Flights, accommodation, some meals and a celebrity forum in each cricket centre are included.

Skiiing break

A FOUR-NIGHT American ski-break, including heli-skiing in inaccessible areas, top-class accommodation (with breakfast) at a

Vail Hotel townhouse, daily massages and two-day lift passes costs £10,960 for four people, excluding air travel, from Orient Express Hotels (0181-568 8366).

Tanked up

THOSE with an ambition to drive a chieftain tank, a Bren carrier, a go-kart and a four-wheel drive, tackle an assault course with greasy poles over cold water, or take up laser clay shooting, can take part in an Anglian Activity Break (01508 492132) multi-driving and sport extravaganza in Thetford Forest, Norfolk. A current driving licence is required. (The activities cost between £8 and £30 each.)

For those who prefer to enjoy rather less macho activities, a break combining clay shooting and archery in the forest costs £57 per person with motel accommodation, and an extra £21 per person for B&B.

Rich rewards

A TREASURE hunt, with cases of Bouzy Rouge wine from Champagne as prizes, has been set up by Intravel (01653 628811) which points holidaymakers down Normandy's Cherbourg peninsula and through Calvados country to the Auberge de l'Abbaye in the village of Be-Hellouin.

By solving clues - identifying statues and historical references - participants gain rewards en route, a degustation of Pommeneau or Calvados, assorted terrines and local sweetmeats. The price of the break is £156, including three nights' half-board at three hotels, and return ferry crossing for a car and passengers.

● CORRECTION The telephone number of Tourism Victoria is 0171-240 7176; we regret printing an inaccurate number in Weekend (August 24).

That feeling of déjà vu

It is la rentrée in Paris, the time when citizens return from holiday indolence and smarten up. Women's thoughts turn to autumnal lipsticks, Chanel handbags and the essential winter wardrobe. And any Parisian label-junkie worth her Hermes heads to the dépot-vente, the shops which specialise in pristine secondhand couture.



Many of these shops are in the chi-chi 16th arrondissement, where the richest women in Paris live and shed their clothes four times a year with the social seasons. So there are Chanel suits not long off the catwalk, Hermes scarves, Yves Saint Laurent, Valentino, Alaïa, Ungaro, Kenzo, and even the more radical Moschino and Vivienne

Westwood at half or a third of the original price. Remember, however, that the original price was gargantuan, so banish thoughts of Oxfam and London's Camden market and their bargains from your mind, and reach for your credit card.

The dépot-ventes are only for the serious shopper obsessed with big-name designers, and looking for rather grand clothes. The casual tourist with a few hours to spare should not attempt what takes a Frenchwoman with a well-honed eye a whole afternoon.

The largest secondhand shop is Réciprocité on Rue de la Pompe near the La Muette Metro. Walk north and you will see L'Occaserie, a smaller, cheaper version. The first L'Occaserie at No 19 specialises in designer baby and maternity clothes. It is fine for party dresses, blazers and those Austrian-style woolen jackets with contrasting piping, but casual clothes are not cheap, and often over-washed by the time they reach the shop.

just over £100, and an Yves Saint Laurent "le smoking" suit with a skirt for £300. There are also Montana and Lacroix jackets for £130, an Isaac Mizrahi green-and-white patent bag for £60, and the eternal Hermes scarf for £80.

Further up the street is Réciprocité, a secondhand mecca for many Parisians. There are five different specialist shops, for women's daywear, eveningwear, menswear, accessories and coats on both sides of the street. The accessories shop has an entire back room dedicated to handbags, including a Hermes anigou in crocodile at £3,500. For £50 or so, however, you can come away with a chic bag with a blatant designer label. As I lurked, a grandly dressed woman in her sixties bought some Chanel ear-rings. "Have you a box? It's a present," she said unashamed. The saleswoman unlocked a cupboard full of new-looking little boxes with various designers' logos, and the present was passed off as brand new.

In the suit and eveningwear department, the clothes are neatly ranked by designer, colour and size - a great deal in size 10. A short pink tweed Chanel suit was more than £1,000, but would cost twice that new. Many of the buttons had been snipped off the Chanels on the racks, and, presumably, sewn convincingly on some cheaper garment at home. The ladies of the 16th may be rich, but they are not extravagant.

Over in the 2nd arrondissement, in a pretty arcade near the Bourse, there is La Marelle. The labels here are not so grand, but the clothes are more youthful - Joseph, Kenzo, Agnès B - and the bargains are better. A brown velvet Joseph redingote in perfect condition was under £100. There are also smart dresses and shoes for children.

KATE MUIR
● L'Occaserie, 19 and 30 Rue de la Pompe, 16th (45 03 16 56). Réciprocité, 92, 93, 95, 101 and 123 Rue de la Pompe, 16th (47 04 30 28). La Marelle, 23 Galerie Vivienne, 2nd (42 60 08 11). The Paris phone code prefix is 00 331.

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TRAVEL CONTINUED ON PAGE 26.

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TRAVEL CONTINUED ON PAGE 26.

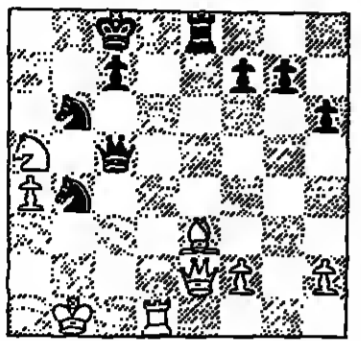
built. At first sight, the capital, rain roads and small villages suggested mind, (obsessions with plastic plates) it different, and potentially more serious.

GAMES

CHESS

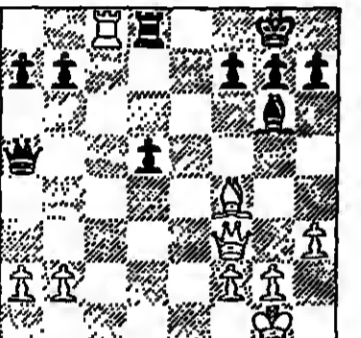
by Raymond Keene

ONCE AGAIN, my postbag has yielded a number of fascinating queries and some typical and unusual tactical motifs.



White to play. He would like to capture the black queen on c5, but at the moment this would not turn out well because of the pin along the e-file.

Solution: 1 Rd8+ Kxd8 2 Nb7+ or 1... Rxd8 and 2 Bxc5 is safe for White. However, Frank Langmaid of West Sussex suggests 1 Qg4+ for White, with the idea of capturing the black queen next move.



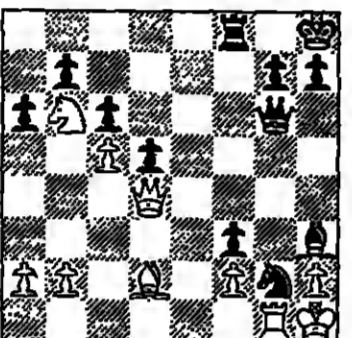
White to play. The position is from the game Karpov-Timman.

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene This position is from the game Dührssen - Troger, Bad Elster 1936. It is often a mistake to grab material when you have a strong initiative.

Amsterdam 1991, and demonstrates the refined tactical sense of the FIDE world champion. White would like to play 1 Bc7 forking queen and rook, but Black can then reply 1... Qe1+.

Steven Emmott of Geneva suggests that White could win more quickly with the following sequence, which also speculates on the tenuous defensive relationship between Black's queen and his rook.



Black to play. This position is from the game Wygodchikov-Alekhhine, Russia 1908. Can you see the brilliant combination Alekhine found to exploit the constricted position of the white king and emerge with extra material?

Solution: 1... Nf4 2 Rxb6 (2 Bxf4 Bg2+) 2... Bg2+ 3 Rxb2 Bg2+ 4 Kg1 Ne2+ and 5... Nxd4 with an easy win.

Kenneth Mackay of Sutton Coldfield wonders why White does not try 1... Nf4 2 Rxb6 Bg2+ and now 3 Kgl, instead of 3 Rxb2. The answer is that after 3 Kgl, Black has a choice of elegant mates with either 3... Ne2 or 3... Nh3.



PUNCHLINE

READERS are invited to write an amusing caption for the cartoon (right), from The Strand Magazine (reproduced with permission from Westminster Libraries, Sherlock Holmes Collection, Marylebone Library).



IT'S LATIN, HE SAID. I COULD READ IT IF I KNEW A LITTLE MORE LATIN

The cartoon will be printed again next week on the Games page with a caption selected from those submitted.

Send caption suggestions on a postcard with your name and address to: Strand Caption (16), Weekend Games Page, The Times, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN.

The Editor's decision is final. The closing date for entries is Wednesday, September 11.



Consternation among the fourth form as the head boy strays into the line of their indoor frisbee course

The winning caption for last week's cartoon (above) was submitted by R. Dixon of Chichester, West Sussex

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

ELECTUARY a. A German prince b. Something to lick c. An election official

TENEBRIFIC a. Terrific b. A horror story c. Rendering obscure

FLAGITIOUS a. Worn out b. Worn out c. Mistaken

PIGSNEY a. A pig's trotter b. Dear girl c. Hunky-dory

Answers on page 21

BRIDGE

by Robert Sheehan

WHAT IS your lead from:

♠A9532 ♥AK ♦1083 ♣973

after this bidding (South deals):

Table with columns W, N, E, S and rows Pass, 2♣, 3♥, 4♥, All Pass

15-17 balanced ♠ Stayman

When Poland played Britain in the Junior European Championship in July, the Polish West, Krzysztof Ginda, led the ace of spades. He was aware his partner would have little, if any, high card strength.

East played the four and South the six on the first spade. At trick two West continued spades, East playing the jack (thus showing an initial holding of J10-9) and declarer the eight.

It is clear that East can have at most a queen, even if South is a point light for his opening bid. If East has Q10-x of clubs he won't make a trick there - for example, South can discard a club from

dummy on his marked king of spades, and subsequently take a ruff. So the only chance is to play East for the jack of hearts, and you should continue with a third round of spades.

South wins the king, East following, and plays a second trump. You win and administer the coup de grace with a fourth spade, promoting East's jack of trumps for the setting trick. That was the defence Ginda found. The full deal was:

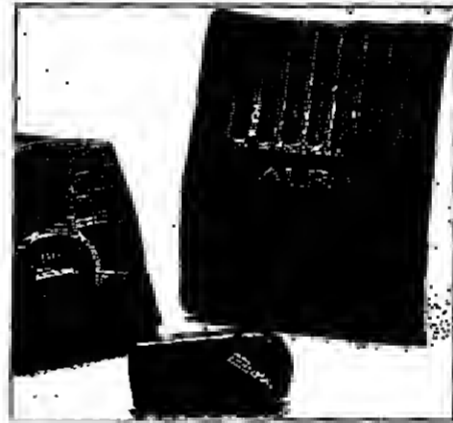
Hand diagram showing cards for North and South in various suits.

Notice West defended in the only way to beat Four Hearts. South's opening of INT on a hand containing a singleton is neither orthodox nor recommended, but there was some method in his madness: a singleton king in the closed hand at No-Trumps often works as well as king-doubleton, especially when the defenders do not expect declarer to have a shortage.

Had North's thinking been as No-trump-orientated as his partner's, he might have glanced at his soft collection of queens and jacks and raised INT straight to the unbeatable 3NT. And I suppose with his strong clubs South might have concealed his feeble hearts over North's Two Club response.

COMPUTER GAMES AND PASTIMES

by Tim Wapshott



Add excitement with Aura Interactor's vibrating back cushion and backpack

DID THE EARTH move for me this week? A little. Testing id Software's long-awaited Doom sequel and Aura Interactor's throbbing hardware left me slightly shaken but not especially stirred.

When the computer gaming history books are written, id Software will be up there with the greats for filling the blast-fest niche. It launched itself on an unsuspecting public towards the end of the 1980s with Wolfenstein 3D, a small but revolutionary programme oozing atmosphere in a Nazi-zapping stanzard set among corridors, staircases and secret passages.

The key to Wolfenstein's delight was its refreshing simplicity - all you had was a weapon with which to face an endless oncoming army. At a time when others tried to be ever-more sophisticated by requiring many mouse clicks before delivering even a single new scene, id Software broke imagination boundaries like no other to immerse us in its affordable synthetic virtual reality.

and it, much darker romps with savage monsters and bucket-loads of gore.

Ever since the industry has been waiting to see what the company could come up with next. The answer is Quake. This is a superlative game, the Bentley to Doom's Rolls-Royce. But though magnificent and beautiful in every detail it has one major drawback - the territory is too familiar, so you feel like you've already played it.

By coursing through Quake's Gothic labyrinth, you must seek out four runes. These allow you to open a pit where you face the ultimate challenge, a showdown with a witch-goddess in her otherworld cathedral.

You start deep in the bowels of the medieval construction, and progress logically through countless levels, darning around finding keys and supplies or discovering secret rooms.

The company has billed Quake as "the most important pc game ever". You may have already spotted some of its advertisements in magazines and on billboards, showing wholesome happy families contentedly at play. These seem unlikely images to opt for, since the young children depicted

would doubtless have nightmares and require counselling were they to be plugged unchecked into Quake.

You can improve your survival chances at any time with a host of cheats. For immediate access to all weapons and plenty of ammunition, type Impulse 9, and for invincibility, type God. Fly enables you to float up and down, while Noclip means you can pass through walls, floors and ceilings; using both together you can merely shortcut every level and drift straight to the exit. Use Fly and Noclip together with caution, once you opt for those the challenge of completing the game can quickly evaporate.

If you've been thinking of getting Doom then don't, do yourself a favour and pick up Quake instead. It's not especially ground-breaking and doesn't turn the genre on its head but it is the superior product.

The graphics are richer with a less harsh and more mellow colour scheme than Doom. Adding more to the proceedings are wonderful, stereo sound effects to immerse you deeper into the nightmare.

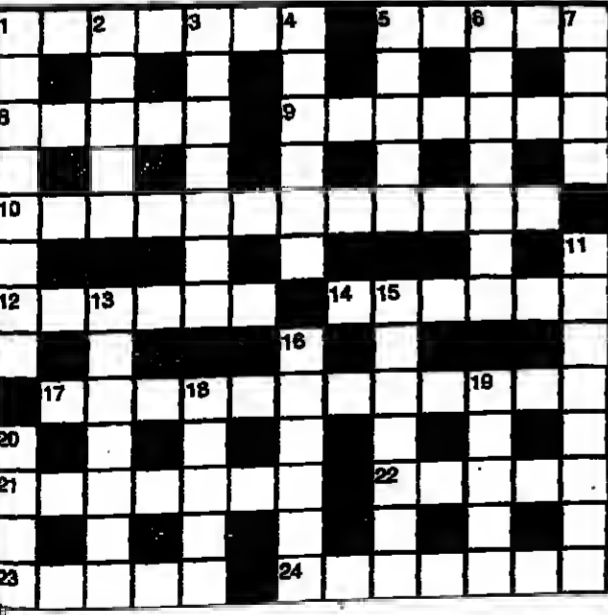
Further dimension can be added to any action game with two vibrating gadgets from Aura Interactor, a back cushion and a backpack. These plug into a sound source from the computer or games console and relay vibrations corresponding to bass sound waves. The resultant body pulsating rhythms are meant to make you feel like you are really there.

Tested on Quake, the packs do have a high novelty value and, if you are in the mood, work to some extent. You can alter the power and filter of the rhythm feed to the mono unit but better control over the vibrating effect wouldn't go a miss. Nor would the option to turn off the tiny plastic speaker in the backpack.

Both gadgets also work with routine sound sources, such as a Walkman, hi-fi or television. While sitting on a cushion pulsating away to bass sounds of rap music might drive you insane, the cushion can have its scary moments during a good horror movie.

"Peter sat down to rest, he was out of breath and trembling with fright... After a time he began to wonder about, going lippily-lippily." Beatrix Potter, Tale of Peter Rabbit (1902).

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 881

- ACROSS: 1 Snobbish: pair of cymbals; a tipper (4-3); 5 Infill, cause (eg havoc) (5); 8 Pondered (5); 9 Students' charity/fun period (3-4); 10 Ideas adopted from reading (derog) (4,5); 12,14 The Heavenly Twins (6,6); 17 Roman anti-Pict defence (8,4); 21 Mental torment (7); 22 I acknowledge (radio) (5); 23 Dot-dash code (5); 24 Protection (7); DOWN: 1 Deformity: sort of whale, bridge (8); 2 Enthusiasm (5); 3 Spanish gentleman (7); 4 Front of neck (6); 5 Wheeled vehicle (for pulling) (5); 6 Everlasting (7); 7 He had a little list (Mikado) (3-2); 11 Venturer into unknown (8); 13 Walk proudly (7); 15 Keep watch on (7); 16 Anticlimax (6); 18 River in Wagner's Ring (5); 19 Thieves' cant (5); 20 Placidity (4)

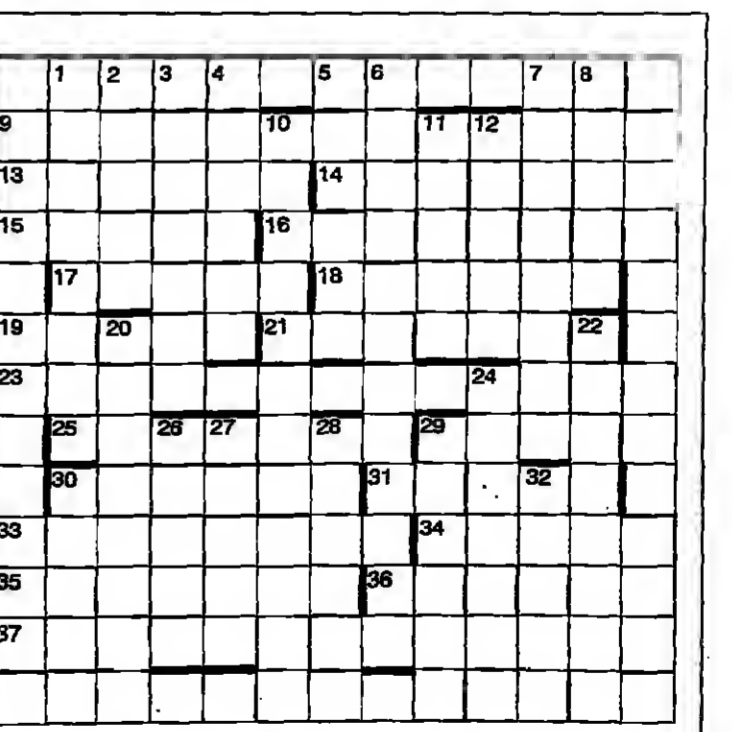
SOLUTION TO NO 880 ACROSS: 3 First Aid 7 Detail 8 Gilpin 9 Collar 10 Admire 11 Stop 13 Tabby 15 Lace 17 Tapers 18 Novena 19 Plaque 20 Entrap 21 Wherever DOWN: 1 Devout 2 Gallop 3 Florida 4 Spindly 5 Amphibia 6 Danseuse 11 Southampton 12 On a plate 13 Torture 14 Blunder 15 Savvy 16 Conrad

No 3374: Enclosure by Poat

STARTING from the top left-hand corner, three familiar monos are inscribed clockwise around the grid; seven across lights have something in common, and provide a hint as to the type of motto required. Where doubled letters would normally occur within this sequence, one is elided. Down lights must be jumbled before entry. Chambers 1993 is recommended.

- ACROSS: 9 King Edwards, initially, that I tow up in harvest (13, hyphenated); 13 Traveller's Rest - it houses horse (6); 14 Polish leader suffers reverse after first of convenient judicial decisions (7, hyphenated); 15 Trifle possibly made of cheese (5); 16 Ladies cavorting around man following the sun (6); 17 Third unknown source of anger; anger is spent here (5); 18 One advances in sales business to do with network (6); 19 Wrapped in bacon, tomato, it may be worth something in Portugal (5); 21 See plenty of asses in a ride around (7); 22 Spiders at heart of cave, rich, full and dark - one gets the wrong idea (13); 25 See founders of Shadows in unperformed musical "Wonderful Land" (7); 29 Stale Persian bread, millet with hint of corn (5); 30 Old rule effecting terminal displacement of landowner (6); 31 He might have lent support with this (5); 33 Gun, shot by lieutenant, odd piece (8); 34 Marshlands swallowing many useless parts of whales (5); 35 Seat of learning has hackneyed quality in triangular team (7); 36 When evaluating game, is it worth it? (6); 37 Inhabitant of commune to freely plant its share (13); DOWN: 1 Jewish version of Cliff hit, ie - could be "Move It, gyrating with zeal" (6); 2 Tear made by a lariat (5); 3 Take a look in top room, say, for tackle rope (7); 4 I wear odd raiment, perhaps, an "I'm rated" - (6); 5 Before conclusion of pirouette, drag foot (6); 6 Measuring pressure in hydrodynamics department, set in short entrance exam to a student (12); 7 Strip broadcast to hunting-party (8); 8 Climber's endless impudent talk and gossip (5); 10 Busybody during Lent, say, led red in a dance (12); 11 Scottish stalls set up for new ale (5); 12 Hill-walker, somewhat disheartened? (5); 20 Bird's truncated feather held in grip of senior (8); 22 Lawyer has skirts for flashy bird (8); 24 A rudiment of Shakespeare is relevant, it's said (7); 26 Dupe a pal - that's rare, man! (5); 27 Island well up where rivers used to debouch (5); 28 Nun is pure? Doubtful, if principles are forgotten (6); 29 Amidst Edmund's din, a forte may stum (6); 30 Foul gums, the result of incomplete brushings (5); 32 Stoop once, dwine as week gives way to year (5)

Solution to No 3374: A Puzzle with a Catch by Phi. A circular word puzzle with letters arranged in a circle and numbered 1-37. The solution lists the words found in each direction: Across: 9 KING EDWARDS, 13 TRAVELLER'S REST, 14 POLISH LEADER, 15 TRIFLE, 16 LADIES, 17 THIRD, 18 ONE, 19 WRAPPED, 21 SEE, 22 SPIDERS, 25 FOUNDERS, 29 STALE, 30 OLD, 31 HE, 33 GUN, 34 MARSHLANDS, 35 SEAT, 36 WHEN, 37 INHABITANT; Down: 1 JEWISH, 2 TEAR, 3 TAKE, 4 I, 5 BEFORE, 6 MEASURING, 7 STRIP, 8 CLIMBER, 10 BUSYBODY, 11 SCOTTISH, 12 HILL, 20 BIRD, 22 LAWYER, 24 A, 26 DUPE, 27 ISLAND, 28 NUN, 29 AMIDST, 30 FOUL, 32 STOOP.



LISTENER CROSSWORD No 3374 In association with CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS NAME: ADDRESS: Cut out and send the completed crossword and coupon above to The Listener Crossword No 3374, 63 Green Lane, St Albans, Hertfordshire AL3 6HE. Entries must be received by Thursday, September 19.

The winner will receive: The Cambridge Encyclopedia, the most up-to-date and comprehensive one-volume encyclopedia available, with more than 26,000 entries; The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language, a highly illustrated format embracing every aspect of the English language in one volume; and The Cambridge Guide to Literature, covering all the leading writers and movements in literature written in English up to the present. Two runners-up will receive The

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TRAVEL CONTINUED FROM PAGE 24

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POPULAR PRIVATISATIONS
Karen Zagor on the next step as last payment deadline on PowerGen and National Power approaches

More than 700,000 investors who rushed to buy shares in National Power and PowerGen in 1995 must now decide whether to write that cheque to pay for the third and final instalment. The deadline for cheques or bankers drafts reaching the Registrar is Thursday, September 12.

The 1995 issue was not the first public offering for the two power generators. In 1991, the Government sold off 60 per cent of its holdings in each company in a two-step public offering.

The sale of the Government's remaining 40 per cent in 1995 was enormously popular. The initial public offer was so heavily subscribed that the Treasury increased the portion allocated to small investors to 51.3 per cent from 40 per cent. More than one million private investors bought shares in 1995. Today, about 70 per cent still hold the partly-paid shares.

What are the options for partly-paid shareholders?

If you still hold your partly paid shares, you can meet the final instalment, or do nothing. It is now too late to sell the partly-paid shares in the open market, the deadline for such sales was Friday.

The final payments are 136p per National Power share and 142p per PowerGen share. If you qualify for a discount, you owe 121p for every National Power share and 127p for each PowerGen share.

If you cannot afford to meet the payments, you can do nothing and the Treasury will sell the shares at the current market value. It will deduct any dealing and administration charges and pay you the balance.

The postal strike has interrupted the delivery of the documentation from the registrars. Anyone who has not received their forms by Monday should phone their registrar immediately.

How have the shares fared?

Anyone who bought into the first, public offer in 1991 has done well. They will have paid a total of 175p per share for their National Power and PowerGen shares. Today, shares in National Power change hands at about 383p while PowerGen trade at about 490.5p.

The story is different for investors in the later privatisation. On the surface, neither share has done particularly well since 1995. Both have noticeably underperformed the FT-SE All-share index since then. Indeed, National Power partly-paid shares are trading below the price that investors have already paid - 340p for National Power and 370p for PowerGen. The partly-paid shares trade at about 246.5p and 346.5p respectively.

But the quoted prices mask the hefty dividends which have made the shares so attractive. National Power recently paid out a special dividend of 100p per share; other dividends add up to 34.1p since 1995. PowerGen shareholders have received dividends worth 31p. The prospect of strong dividend payments was one reason advisers recommended buying into the initial public offer.

How have the companies done?

Both companies have done reasonably well in the last year, with solid profits and dividend growth. Both have also extended their presence overseas but have suffered setbacks. National Power received a blow when Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade, blocked its bid to acquire Southern Electric. PowerGen had a similar setback with its agreed bid for Midlands Electricity. An offer from Southern of the US for National Power was also blocked.

What does the future hold?

Projections for the future depend very much on whom you speak to. There is some concern that both companies could be hit by a windfall tax if Labour wins the next election, but analysts are divided about how serious the impact of such a tax would be.

Kleinwort Benson last week contributed to a decline in National Power's share price by reducing its rating on the stock to "sell" from "hold" although it is maintaining its "hold" rating on PowerGen.

Tim Anker, utilities analyst at Kleinwort, says the change reflects concern that National Power will have trouble competing after 1998 when the electricity industry opens up to competition. This, in turn, will make it difficult for the company to maintain its strong dividend growth. "The UK market is very easy at the moment. But we expect the average prices that they get to fall as it moves to much shorter-term contracts."

Mr Anker says PowerGen is in a stronger financial position, and that it should have little problem maintaining above average dividend growth, even if it faces stiffer competition and a windfall tax. He added: "Overall, whether you decide to hold or sell depends on what you are holding these companies for. If you have a very positive outlook for gas prices and their impact on electricity then you should continue to hold the shares. But if you are holding them as part of a nice, low-risk utilities portfolio, they don't fit the bill. You would be better off in National Grid, once the regulatory risk is out of the way, or in a regional electricity or water company."

Justin Urquhart, Stewart, director of Barclays Stockbrokers, sees both stocks as strong holds. He says: "They are both still good, blue chip stocks. And now is not the time to sell. They have both performed poorly because of regulatory control and concerns about the pending election. It's not as if you are dealing with companies that are going to post losses. I would expect both stocks to come back in nine months to a year. I would stick them in a PEP if you haven't already."

He notes that even with more competition coming into the market, the underlying strengths of the companies will not disappear.

He says: "In a mature market, with growing demand for power, the companies are well placed, even with more competition. Because of their expansion overseas they are both in good positions to buy up companies or act as consultants for overseas companies. They could also expand into other utility provision such as wind power or gas provision, or they could move into the retail side."

Reflections on the power sales



National Power's Ironbridge power station: demand is growing at home but the presence overseas has been extended

Giants scrap over the Refuge orphan millions

Policyholders in Refuge Assurance and United Friendly are being forced to watch from the sidelines as some of the biggest institutional investors in the country fight over their insurers' future.

Refuge and United Friendly announced last month that they intended to merge into a single company, to be called United Assurance and worth £1.5 billion. Some powerful City fund managers are threatening to block the deal.

The row centres on the so-called "orphan assets" which Refuge holds in its life fund. They have accumulated over many years partly because actuaries have been conservative in their calculation of bonus payouts, and partly because shareholders have not always taken the investment returns to which they were entitled.

In Refuge's founding principles any surplus is to be distributed 90 per cent to policyholders and 10 per cent to shareholders. However, many of the policyholders to whom these bonuses should technically belong have already died.

Refuge shareholders believe that they are now entitled to some of these assets which are currently in the ordinary branch fund. When Refuge last month announced plans for the merger, it said it had identified a surplus in the industrial branch fund worth £430 million, which the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) had agreed belonged to shareholders.

Refuge says that after discussions with the DTI it believes the assets in the ordinary branch are never likely to be released to shareholders.

At the eleventh hour Refuge bowed to their demands and agreed to offer a sweetener. This involves giving shareholders a financial instrument called an option, which would allow them to claim a part of this surplus should the DTI ever give permission for it to be redistributed in the future.

This has appeased some, but not all, investors, both large and small, have until September 26 to make up their minds.

John Cudworth, chief executive of Refuge, is seeking to have a shareholders' meeting in Wiltshire, Cheshire, on Monday opened and adjourned to enable investors to examine the new offer.

MARIANNE CURPHEY

Tax has to be fun

So you thought self-assessment meant working out your own tax? So did the Inland Revenue until it discovered that the prospect sent guinea-pig taxpayers in trials in Leicester and Southampton into a tangle of anxiety and inadequacy. Cue soothing message from the taxman: "We would prefer you to send us your tax return and let us do the calculation for you."

The last thing the Revenue wants is to make tax seem difficult.

On the contrary, yesterday's unveiling of the new tax returns, to be sent out for the first time next April to the 8.5 million people who have to fill in returns, made out that the experience was almost going to be fun. In fact, says the Revenue, the new British tax return is "probably the best tax return in the world". If this is so, it has needed two years of painful experimentation to create the new, fun-to-fill-in return.

The different sections of the return are colour coded. The bits taxpayers have to concentrate on are picked out in blue and green against a calm grey background. Taxpayers who had actually completed the forms were apparently overwhelmed by the form's clarity and visual impact. And best of all, the difficult bit for masochists wanting to work out their own bill was now well separated from the rest of the return and could safely be ignored or dropped in the nearest bin by the vast majority.

The Revenue denied there had been a policy shift to encouraging people away from working out their own tax. Of course people who wanted to, could, said Doug Smith, programme director for self-assessment. As far as the Revenue was concerned, it cost the same to process returns, regardless of who worked them out.

So are the evil rumours about self-assessment being mainly for the benefit of the Treasury cost-cutters wrong?

SARA MCCONNELL

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Foreign aspects reveals how inheritance tax is charged on foreign assets if you are domiciled in the United Kingdom...

Settled property explains

LIZANNE ROSE

SAVERS' BEST BUYS

Table with columns: Account, Notice of term, Deposit, Rate, Interest paid. Includes Instant Access Accounts and Notice Accounts & Bonds.

Table with columns: Account, Notice of term, Deposit, Rate, Interest paid. Includes First TESSAS (TAX FREE) and Sun Banking Corp.

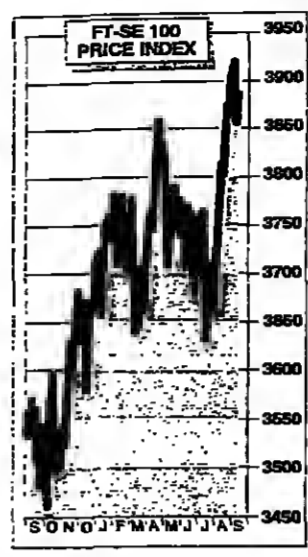
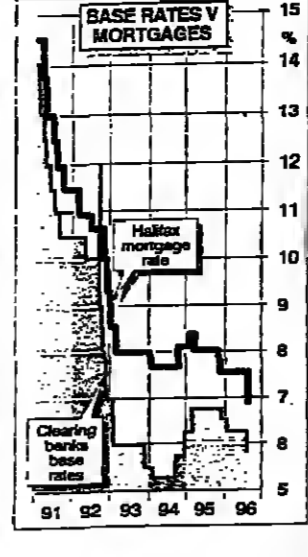
Table with columns: Card type, Interest per month, APR%, Fee per annum. Includes Robert Fleming/S&P and Midland Bank.

Table with columns: Personal Loans, APR, Monthly payment on £3,000 for 3yrs with insurance, no insurance. Includes Direct Line and Midland.

Table with columns: Gross coupon, Buying price, Gross yield, Issue price, Minimum purchase amount. Includes Birmingham Midshires and Bradford & Bingley.

Table with columns: Gross coupon, Buying price, Gross yield, Issue price, Minimum purchase amount. Includes Cheshire and First Nat.

Source: Moneyfacts, the Monthly Guide to Investment & Mortgage Rates (01822 500 677)



NATIONAL SAVINGS

Table with columns: Gross rate, At tax rates 20%, 40%, Minimum investment, Notice, Contact. Includes Ordinary A/C, Investment A/C, Income Bond, etc.

PENSION ANNUITIES

Table with columns: Single Life (level ann), Joint Life, 2/3 WIDOWS (level annuity). Includes General, Prudential, Sun Lf of Can, etc.

Compiled by: Lizanne Rose

GUARANTEED INCOME BONDS

Table with columns: Investment (£), Company, Standard Rate (%). Includes 1 Year, 2 Years, 3 Years, 4 Years, 5 Years.

PIBS

Table with columns: Fixed Rate, Floating Rate. Includes Birmingham Midshires, Bradford & Bingley, Cheshire, etc.

LARGER LENDERS

Table with columns: Lender, Interest rate, Loan size, Max %, Notes. Includes Building Societies, Bank of Ireland, etc.

FIRST TIME BUYERS

Table with columns: Lender, Interest rate, Loan size, Max %, Notes. Includes Building Societies, Banks, etc.

LINKED INVESTMENT INVESTMENTS

Large table listing various investment funds and their performance metrics, including AEGION LIFE ASSURANCE, ALBANY LIFE, ALFA LIFE, etc.

سكنا من الاجل

WEEKEND MONEY LETTERS

Pros and cons of company cars

From Mr C. Wales
Sir, Marianne Curphey has left an important consideration out of the equation when showing the pros and cons of company cars [A Question of Money, August 34].
Under the Fixed Profit Car Scheme (FPCS), the Inland Revenue allows you to be reimbursed a fairly generous tax-free mileage allowance by your employer when using your own car on company business. The current scale permits a maximum of 61p per mile for the first 4,000 miles per year in a 2-litre car, followed by 33p per mile for subsequent miles. The figures for a car of 2 litres or less are 43p per mile for the first 4,000 miles, and 23p thereafter.

Looking at the example, which was a choice between a £26,000 car or a salary increase of £5,000 per year for an employee covering an average of 10,000 business miles per year, I would suggest that the employer would pay about £7,000 per year for a contract hire car, plus maybe £800 for insurance, plus £900 (ie, 9p per mile) reimbursed to the employee for petrol for the business miles, and finally Class 1A National Insurance contributions of about £630 on the benefit. This means the employer is currently paying about £9,330 each year.
For the same overall cost, if you were thinking of giving up your company car, you could be offered a deal whereby you are reimbursed £4,400 tax free for your business miles under the FPCS, plus a pay rise of £4,400 (ie, £4,930 net of employer's NI contributions).

After 40 per cent tax, the pay rise would be cut to £2,680 but the mileage allowance of £4,400 would be tax-free. Adding these two together, plus £2,420 tax saved because you do not have the benefit of a £26,000 company car, gives a figure of £9,680 per year to buy and run your own car.

That should be enough to run a pretty decent car and have some change in your pocket. But unfortunately your employer might be wanting to make a saving so you could end up with some sort of compromise.
Yours faithfully,
CHARLES WALES,
March Cottage,
7 Van Diemen's Lane,
Lansdown,
Bath.

When interest rates were decided every Thursday afternoon

From Mr George Rawley
Sir, In reply to Mr G.K. Moore (Pay a fair rate of interest, August 17) on 1930s interest rates, they depended on the bank rate announced by the Bank of England each Thursday afternoon.
In the high street banks, borrowing rates were described as "1 per cent (or more) over bank rate, minimum 3 per cent". Only very large borrowers of undoubted integrity could borrow at 4 per cent.
As for interest allowed to savers, the deposit rate was always 2 per cent below bank rate. In the worst of the 1930s Depression when the bank rate fell to 2 per cent, the high street banks allowed 1/2 per cent on deposit accounts and this persisted for some time.

Yours faithfully,
GEORGE RAWLEY,
No 2 The Marlinspike,
Shoreham Beach, Sussex.



Incompetent bank staff

From Ms Julie Alexander
Sir, The incompetence of the banking system never fails to amaze. In June, Lloyds Bank agreed to honour a cheque I was to pay to my son by transferring funds from my deposit account to cover it.
In July my statement arrived showing they had not made the required transfer. The usual apologies followed with confirmation that there would be no interest charges.
In August my statement arrived informing me that I was to be charged £8 fixed charge and £68.89 interest.
Apologies followed and being offered £20 compensation I held out for £50 which they eventually agreed.
And all because my instructions were not carried out and promises were broken. Whatever happened to service?
Yours faithfully,
JULIE ALEXANDER,
50 Radnor Walk, SW3.

Sound practice

From Mr P.G. Cox
Sir, Here, for a change, is an example of good business practice. I applied for £1,000 of stock in the Somerfield Share Offer via Hargreaves Lansdown. My cheque was eventually returned indicating I had withdrawn my bid - this was untrue. I protested to Hargreaves Lansdown and the offering house, Kleinwort Benson. Both were sympathetic but offered no redress.
However, one or both must have contacted Lloyds Bank Registrars as the latter have accepted that I was not notified of the need to accept the revised offer. I have now been offered £1,000 worth of stock at the issue price of 145p or a cheque for £82 representing today's premium. This is a just and honourable settlement - may I commend it to other business houses?
Yours faithfully,
P.G. COX,
The Forstal,
Little Chart,
Ashford, Kent.

Over 7 and other little wrinkles the Revenue gets up to

From Mr E. Griffiths
Sir, with regard to Miss Brocklebank's letter (Mr Taxman do wake up, August 17).

I note that far too many seasoned accountants and many of the general public live in awe - if not abject fear - of the Inland Revenue. What nonsense!

Those who are familiar with the workings of the Inland Revenue will know well the "Over 7" list which had to be diligently completed every Friday.

For the uninitiated, this relates to the Inland Revenue's arrangements for handling post.

Post from the general public was to be answered within one to 365 days, interdepartmental post within one month, post from a Member of Parliament either by return of post or within seven days. If the full information on the case is not

available, at least an acknowledgement and reason for delay must be given.

So, Miss Brocklebank and other troubled souls, contact your Member of Parliament and you will get results.

The Revenue won't like it, they'll make you a "jacket case".

That's your own personal folder easily identifiable by a big red sticker on the front, meaning that you are not easily fobbed off with glib departmental waffle and that you don't take "No" for an answer.

Please write to your MP with all relevant details, saying you are unable to get a reply from the public servants your taxes are supporting with salaries etc. You'll be amazed how soon you'll get a suitable reply and action!

Yours faithfully,
ERYL GRIFFITHS,
119 Box Lane,
Wrexham, North Wales.

From Mr N.P.E. Wheeler

Sir, I - and doubtless many other self-employed readers - have recently received identical "form" letters from the Inland Revenue.

They start "I have received your accounts for this period but have not examined them". The next sentence says that the accounts appear to be incomplete.

Such a conclusion could only be reached after at least a superficial examination which would have revealed, at least in my case, that the accounts were complete.

The process of self-assessment promises to be inexpressibly tedious. It can only be made worse if it is directed on the same illogical lines as this opening gambit.

Yours faithfully,
N.P.E. WHEELER,
20 Cavendish Road,
Sutton,
Surrey.

Woolwich takes a hard line with carers for the learning-disabled

From Mrs C. Gossage
Sir, The letter from Pam Hannam of Bristol Mencap (Halifax discrimination, Weekend Money Letters, August 31) may be unduly optimistic. For instance, to share in the distribution by the Woolwich Building Society, a person with learning disabilities will not merely have to rely on the honesty of the first-named person operating his or

her account. If the first-named person also holds a qualifying Woolwich account in their own name, the learning-disabled person will not qualify for shares as "you cannot be a qualifying member in more than one capacity" (letter to me from the Woolwich, May 8, 1996).

On this basis, I would not be surprised if the majority of learning-disabled people hold-

ing qualifying accounts (albeit in the names of appointees) in the relevant building societies will be found to be ineligible for a payout.

Perhaps the societies could let us have some statistics?
Yours faithfully,
C. GOSSAGE,
Little Brays,
Kingston Stort,
Chinnor,
Oxfordshire.

Letters to Weekend Money are welcomed, but individual replies or advice cannot be given. No legal responsibility can be accepted for advice or statements in these columns and independent advice should be sought. Letters can be faxed on 0171-782-5052.

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Table of stock prices for various sectors including Alcoholic Beverages, Banks, Breweries, Pubs & Rest, Building & Construct, Building Materials, Chemicals, Diversified Industrials, Electricity, Engineering, Engineering Vehicles, Food Manufacturers, Health Care, Household Goods, Insurance, Investment Trusts, Leisure & Hotels, Mining, Oil & Gas, Pharmaceuticals, Printing & Paper, Property, Retailers, Food, Retailers, General, Support Services, Textiles & Apparel, Transport, Water, and Alternative Inv Market.

Table of stock prices for various sectors including Alcoholic Beverages, Banks, Breweries, Pubs & Rest, Building & Construct, Building Materials, Chemicals, Diversified Industrials, Electricity, Engineering, Engineering Vehicles, Food Manufacturers, Health Care, Household Goods, Insurance, Investment Trusts, Leisure & Hotels, Mining, Oil & Gas, Pharmaceuticals, Printing & Paper, Property, Retailers, Food, Retailers, General, Support Services, Textiles & Apparel, Transport, Water, and Alternative Inv Market.

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RACING

Lucayan Prince can add top sprint to Loder's recent haul

By RICHARD EVANS, RACING CORRESPONDENT

DAVID LODER would be ideally placed to write a Tale of Two Seasons after experiencing the highs and lows of being a trainer this year. After a spring in which a classic dream perished as his Newmarket yard was laid low for four months with assorted ailments, his fortunes have been transformed in the past few weeks by horses running out of their skins.

While the wisest course of action for punters may be to keep their powder dry, they can follow two other Loder runners with confidence. Appreciation, Sheikh Mohammed-owned son of In The Wings, has long been regarded as one of the nicer two-year-olds in the yard and he should be able to open his account in the EBF Altrincham Maiden Stakes (5.00) at Haydock.

Richard Evans
Nap: APPREHENSION (5.00 Haydock Park)
Next best: GREENTEAD (2.30 Haydock Park)

seven and eight furlongs as a three-year-old, appears to need every inch of six furlongs. He previously won at Evry in the final strides of the race and stayed on to get second place behind Anabaa. Lucayan Prince has a far higher cruising speed but needs exaggerated waiting tactics. Frankie Dettoni should be able to cover up his moent

from a wide draw and the champion jockey is just the man to produce the talented but slightly mercurial character at the right time. Of the remainder, Barry Hills is expecting a big run from Royal Applause after a confidence-boosting victory at Doncaster five weeks ago. Earlier, Starborough will command considerable support in the Grosvenor Casinos Sirenia Stakes (3.45) at Kempton. The Soviet Star colt barely came off the bridle when making a winning debut at Thirsk 15 days ago and has scope for further improvement. He can see off Arethusa and Moonshine Girl.

One So Wonderful offers classic hint

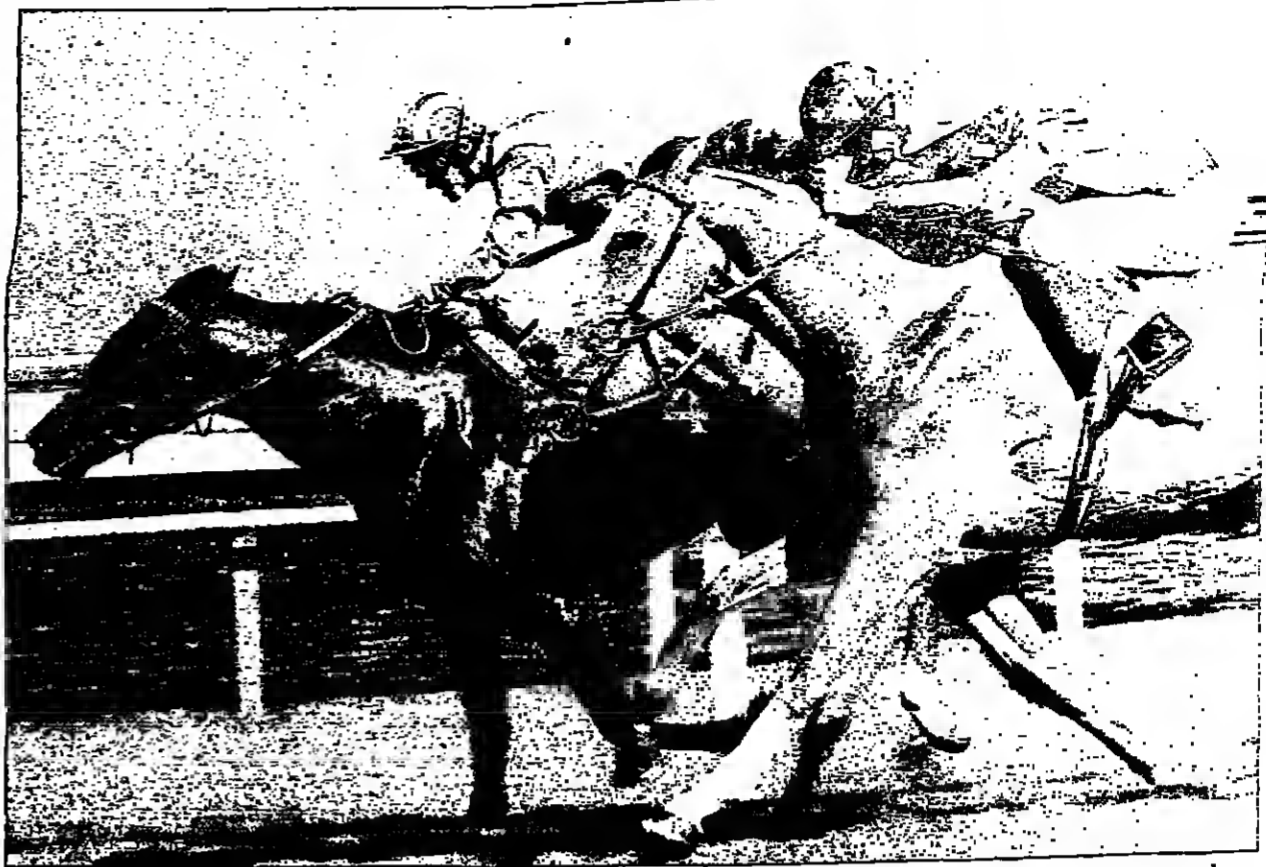
By JULIAN MUSCAT

THE broadest of classic hints was duly delivered at Kempton yesterday but the source came as a complete surprise. One hour after Captain Collins failed to land the odds on his racecourse debut, One So Wonderful suntered to victory in the Milcars Fillies' Stakes to earn a 20-1 quote from Ladbrokes for next year's 1,000 Guineas.

A sense of providence appears to have governed Egon Weinfeld's dealings with One So Wonderful. Weinfeld, whose Helena Springfield Ltd owns and bred the filly, was unwilling to part with her for the 240,000 guineas he was offered at auction last year. If the reserve looked expensive, Weinfeld's naming of the horse implied he knew exactly what he had on his hands. Racegoers were left in the secret yesterday as One So Wonderful streaked 3 1/2 lengths clear of Alphabet in the Milcars Fillies' Conditions Stakes over seven furlongs. Her performance was all the more encouraging for her appearance in the paddock. Although she radiated quality, One So Wonderful, a May foal, was plainly backward.

"She is unfurnished and a little weak," her trainer, Luca Cumani, said. "She works nicely at home but it was good to see her quicken to win her race."

Cumani well knows this family; he trained One So Wonderful's half-sister, Relatively Special, herself a group winner in minor company.



Falak fend off the grey Captain Collins in the Milcars Chertsey Lock Conditions Stakes at Kempton yesterday

Many will have formed the impression that King Sound, who finished fourth, was the best prospect in the race. A 550,000-guinea yearling purchase, the colt was so tenderly handled by Willie Ryan that a stewards' inquiry was inevitable. Connections were given the benefit of the doubt, maintaining the son of Caerleon lacked confidence at home. If a gentle racecourse introduction does all it is reputed for a two-year-old's confidence, King Sound will almost certainly leave this showing well behind.

Captain Collins did not impress in appearance and almost certainly lost the race through inexperience. Nevertheless, this was a disappointing performance from a stable whose untraced juveniles invariably know their business.

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Greenstead can collect again

HAYDOCK PARK

BBC1

2.00: Despite winning his last two starts, Young Duke remains well handicapped, while the in-form Maple Bay goes for his tenth success at Kempton on Monday. The lightly-raced Trafalgar Lady was set plenty to do before finishing strongly behind White Rock at Newmarket last time. The well-drawn Warning Trends is an interesting contender despite a lengthy lay-off, but Primo Lara can bounce back to winning form. He was unseated by the step back to six furlongs at York last time and should be suited by this trip.



KEMPTON PARK CHANNEL 4

3.45: see above. 4.15: Although not the force he was two seasons ago, Cezanne is still smart and was a respectable fifth to First Island in the Queen Anne Stakes at Royal Ascot. Salmon Ladder should appreciate the return to this trip after just failing to catch Anna Mirabilis over ten furlongs at Windsor. However, preference is for Ela-Aristokrati, who was fourth to Halling in the Coral-Eclipse before chasing home the impressive Tamayaz at Haydock. Luca Cumani's runner can go one better. 4.45: In a tough finale for armchair viewers, Haya Ya Kefah is a tentative choice after a good run here behind Welcome Parade. That race came after a 15-week lay-off but earlier in the season Norman Babbage's runner twice won well-contested handicaps at Doncaster and clearly goes well in big fields. Leading Spirit, Artic Courier and Rostin Clover invariably run well here and head the list of dangers.

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HAYDOCK PARK

Table with 2 columns: Race Time and Race Name. Includes 2.00 Primo Lara, 2.30 Greenstead, 3.00 Besiege.

GUIDE TO OUR RACECARD

163 (12) 0-4-32 0000 TIMES 74 (0,0,0,0,0,0) (0,0,0,0,0) 0 Hall 9-10-0 5 West (4) 88. Recent number, Draw to brackets, St-Flag (S) - Fall, P - pulled up, U - unseated rider, B - brought down, S - stepped up, R - retired, D - disqualification, C - course winner, D - distance winner, C - course winner, D - distance winner.

GOING: GOOD TO FIRM DRAW: 6F, HIGH NUMBERS BEST

TOTE JACKPOT MEETING

2.00 STANLEY LEISURE GROUP HANDICAP (25.125; 71 30yd) (11 runners)

Race card for Stanley Leisure Group Handicap with horse names, jockeys, and odds.

FORM FOCUS

HERODIAN 4th of 6 to One Mile in 10y at Sandown Park (11y) good to firm, good to firm, good to firm, good to firm, good to firm, good to firm.

KEMPTON PARK

Table with 2 columns: Race Time and Race Name. Includes 1.45 Injezzat, 2.15 Alkhalas, 2.45 Poppy Carew, 3.15 Willisa.

GOING: GOOD DRAW: 6F, LOW NUMBERS BEST

1.45 GROSVENOR CASINO RAINGATE EUROPEAN BREEDERS FUND MAIDEN FILLES STAKES (OV II, 2-Y-O, £3,095; 6) (14 runners)

Race card for Grosvenor Casino Raingate European Breeders Fund Maiden Filles Stakes.

2.15 GROSVENOR CASINO RAINGATE EUROPEAN BREEDERS FUND MAIDEN FILLES STAKES (OV II, 2-Y-O, £3,095; 6) (14 runners)

Race card for Grosvenor Casino Raingate European Breeders Fund Maiden Filles Stakes.

2.45 GROSVENOR CONNOISSEUR CASINO FILLES CONDITIONS STAKES (OV II, 2-Y-O, £3,095; 6) (14 runners)

Race card for Grosvenor Connoisseur Casino Filles Conditions Stakes.

2.30 CECIL FRAIL RATED HANDICAP (25.264; 1m 3f 200yd) (13 runners)

Race card for Cecil Frail Rated Handicap.

FORM FOCUS

LEONATO 1st of 9 in Royal Ascot in 1st race in 14y at Ascot (11y) good to firm, good to firm, good to firm, good to firm, good to firm, good to firm.

3.00 ST ANNES CONDITIONS STAKES (2-Y-O, £5,277; 1m 30yd) (5 runners)

Race card for St Annes Conditions Stakes.

3.30 HAYDOCK PARK SPRINT CUP (Group 1; £77,250; 6) (11 runners)

Race card for Haydock Park Sprint Cup.

FORM FOCUS

BTWAL best Dance Sequence 3 in group 11, good to firm, good to firm, good to firm, good to firm, good to firm, good to firm.

3.15 GEOFFREY HAMLIN HANDICAP (3-Y-O, £3,956; 1m) (19 runners)

Race card for Geoffrey Hamlyn Handicap.

3.45 GROSVENOR CASINOS SIRENIA STAKES (Ladbrokes 2-Y-O, £3,576; 6) (7 runners)

Race card for Grosvenor Casinos Sirenia Stakes.

4.15 GROSVENOR CASINOS SEPTEMBER STAKES (Group II; £19,470; 1m 3f 30yd) (7 runners)

Race card for Grosvenor Casinos September Stakes.

4.00 LADROCKE HANDICAP (C4 085; 6) (24 runners)

Race card for Ladrocke Handicap.

4.30 SPEKE LIMITED STAKES (C1, £29, 1m 30yd) (8 runners)

Race card for Speke Limited Stakes.

5.00 EUROPEAN BREEDERS FUND ALTRINCHAM MAIDEN STAKES (2-Y-O, £3,805; 71 30yd) (10 runners)

Race card for European Breeders Fund Altrincham Maiden Stakes.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

Table showing course specialists for various tracks and races.

4.45 GROSVENOR VICTORIA CASINO HANDICAP (25.174; 1m 4f) (18 runners)

Race card for Grosvenor Victoria Casino Handicap.

FORM FOCUS

PSTUL best Newport night short-head in 14y at Sandown Park (11y) good to firm, good to firm, good to firm, good to firm, good to firm, good to firm.

5.15 GROSVENOR CASINO READING APPRENTICES HANDICAP (25.225; 1m 2f) (20 runners)

Race card for Grosvenor Casino Reading Apprentices Handicap.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

Table showing course specialists for various tracks and races.

CRICKET

Determined Essex show authority of champions-elect

By Alan Lee, Cricket Correspondent

EDGBASTON (final day of four): Essex (21pts) beat Warwickshire (6) by 170 runs

IF THE tightest championship contest in many years is decided by resolution alone, Essex will not be found wanting. Showing the character of a club that has been there and done it more recently than most, they yesterday recorded their sixth victory in seven games. By way of a bonus, the match ended 30 minutes after lunch, allowing Essex a civilised journey to London for the NatWest Trophy final.

the opening day. Many another side would have been bowled out cheaply and conceded a decisive advantage. Essex scrapped, achieving virtual parity on first innings, then handed over to Gooch to administer the punishment. Warwickshire had lost three

TABLE

Table with columns: P, W, L, O, B, P, B. Lists teams like Leics, Surrey, Derbyshire, Essex, Kent, etc. with their respective statistics.

Remaining fixtures: LEICESTERSHIRE: Sept 12 v Glamorgan (Cardiff), 18 v Worcestershire (Oval); DERBYSHIRE: Sept 12 v Warwickshire (Notley), 18 v Durham (Derby); ESSEX: Sept 12 v Sussex (Chelmsford), 18 v Glamorgan (Queen's Road); KENT: Sept 12 v Hampshire (Canterbury), 18 v Gloucestershire (Bristol).

Smith stands firm to thwart Glamorgan

AN INNINGS of 91 by Robin Smith, whose timing was back to its best, coupled with some staunch batting by the Hampshire tallenders, prevented Glamorgan from gaining a victory at Southampton (two Tennant writes). Otherwise, only Will Kendall, who put on 156 with Smith, of the acting captain, made a score of one.

Penney has been central to immovable rear-guard actions and he played with spirit now. Although his 70 occupied 130 minutes, however, there was no suggestion that he might do more than inconvenience Essex. They disposed of him by summoning the lanky Cowan, whose extra bounce brought an injudicious cut and an edge to Rollins.

Bowler foils Derbyshire

By Michael Henderson

TAUNTON (final day of four): Somerset (10pts) drew with Derbyshire (10)

IN THE end, the pitch was too good and Somerset, after a wobble or two along the way, too bloody-minded. Led by Bowler, who left Derbyshire two years ago and was determined to give his former teammates absolutely nothing, they resisted to the last. Bowler, the acting captain, made 60 in 34 hours before he was stumped brilliantly by Krikken, who was standing up to DeFreitas. It was a wonderful piece of work, as leg-side stumpings usually are to a bowler of that pace. If Derbyshire thought they had made the significant breach, with 30 overs left, a seventh-wicket stand of 75 between Turner and Kerr frustrated them.

what brainlessly, when Jones brought him back for a final blast. Kerr was 68 not out at the end, having benefited from balls that were alternately too full and too short. Mind you, his first ball was an extraordinary business. DeFreitas, who had just removed Bowler, hit the stumps but Kerr was not ready to receive even though the umpire, Clarkson, made no signal to the scorers. It was a peculiar business and a poor piece of umpiring. In retrospect Jones may wish he had given his bowlers more time to dismiss Somerset. He declared after Derbyshire had added 101 in the morning, leaving Somerset to make 383 in 78 overs. It might have been more profitable to allow his bowlers 35, or even 90 overs, to give them a better chance of taking ten wickets on a blameless pitch. DeFreitas made an early breakthrough when Trescothick let a ball that flattened his off stump. By lunch Lathwell, giving the ball a fair old lash, was bowling Somerset along at five runs an over

Austin worth his weight in gold medal

Simon Wilde meets a red rose world who doubles as big-match thorough



Austin cuts a burly figure but opponents have learnt not to take him lightly

IF, in a startling scientific breakthrough, it became possible to clone human beings, who would the England cricket selectors choose as their native model for the accurate, probing, new-ball bowler most likely to win them a one-day match? A lengthy search would end with them probably alighting on someone like Peter Martin, Lancashire's tall, well-muscled opening bowler, with a reputation for reliability. "Come on," the selectors would say, "he looks the part."

Mike Gatting is built the way he is, not hindered him. Austin, sitting and T-shirt jabs at his thighs and calves at the size of these can't you can that. This is just am." His upper is less formidable, a recent winter w/ butcher's warehouse. Yet, while Austin the summer bowler maculate, one-day Martin has strug consistency, it was chosen Texaco Trophy again. "I thought I chance," Austin said more you build bopes the more yo disappointed."

Whitaker's guidance ensures safe progress

TRENT BRIDGE (final day of four): Leicestershire (24pts) beat Nottinghamshire (6) by six wickets

Had Nottinghamshire's tail wagged vigorously, Leicestershire could have faced an awkward day, but it did not. The two remaining wickets fell for seven runs in the space of 37 balls and the visitors then knocked off briskly the 82 they needed for victory. They lost four wickets in the process, three of them in a lively opening spell from Bowen, but never appeared to be in danger of getting into serious trouble. Appropriately, the winning run was scored by James Whitaker, the captain, who added an assuring and unbeaten 30 to his first-innings century. He passed his 1,000 runs for the season, testimony that taking on the captaincy has not affected his form. On the contrary: "I love the job - it has really got me buzzing again," he said yesterday. Whitaker was delighted with the result. "This was a huge win for us," he said. "The pitch was flat and we were without Alan Mullally." Mills, Mullally's usual new-ball partner, took both wickets yesterday to finish with five for 31, an outstanding effort in the conditions. Mullally, who has knee trouble, was on the ground and expected to be fit for their next match, against Durham.

Holloioake's leadership lifts Surrey higher

THE OVAL (final day of four): Surrey (24pts) beat Northamptonshire (5) by 223 runs

EVERYTHING fell into place for Surrey yesterday. Only briefly when Northamptonshire's two Davids, Capel and Ripley, kept vigil with ominous comfort, did anything threaten to spoil their day. But then Ripley retired after a ball from Lewis hit him a bruising blow on the hand and in his absence Northamptonshire folded. Their remaining three wickets yielded 62 runs and Surrey moved to within a point of Leicestershire in the Championship. The Oval was bursting with bonhomie. First a grandson to Reg Bull, an Oval steward, then a daughter to Mr and Mrs Alec Stewart were announced. But before the population explosion really took off, the Surrey players were on their way to a half day off, girding their loins for the crucial one-day contest tomorrow, and in expansive mood. None more expansive, though, than Adam Holloioake, leading Surrey in the continued absence of Stewart. "We're an arrogant bunch," he said. "We believe we can win and while we need to keep our feet on the ground, we are moving in the right direction." Of his own immense contribution to Surrey's most recent victory, he was beguilingly modest. If England require a high-class batsman who can bowl, he should be their man. He would certainly give a significant boost to the PR front. Brendon Julian will also remember this match fondly. Yesterday he added to his century and six first-innings wickets by removing Capel for 48 with a ball which slanted across him and then he accounted for Snape with one which moved the other way.

YESTERDAY'S SCOREBOARDS

Multiple tables showing cricket scoreboards for various matches including Hampshire v Glamorgan, Leicestershire v Nottinghamshire, Surrey v Northamptonshire, Warwickshire v Essex, and others. Each table lists batsmen, bowlers, and scores.

Advertisement for NatWest bank. Text: 'Catch the NatWest Trophy Final'. Includes NatWest logo and slogan 'More than just a bank'. There are also handwritten notes and signatures on the page.

TENNIS

Courage of ailing Sampras elevates him among greats

FROM DAVID MILLER IN NEW YORK

FIRST, Kerri Strug at the Olympic Games in Atlanta, now Pete Sampras, in the US Open championships. A humid American summer is having its fill of heroism in the pursuit of sport. If I live to be 100 I do not expect to witness a more courageous refusal to yield than the fifth-set tie-break in which Sampras, the defending champion, his vision blurred by sickness, defeated Alex Corretja, of Spain.

away tickets: the demand was for Stefan Edberg against Goran Ivanisevic in the evening, an encounter that would prove slight by comparison as Ivanisevic brought Edberg's grand-slam career to a nostalgic halt in straight sets.

Never previously at the quarter-final stage of a grand-slam event, Corretja pressed the three-times US Open champion every stride for more than four hours, traded aces with him equally at 25 apiece, and shook him to the core when raking a two-sets-to-one lead.

Then, in the third game of



Sampras physically ill

As Sampras tottered on the point of collapse, he was saved by the unfortunate Corretja serving a double fault on Sampras's second match point. Corretja sank to his knees in dismay, while Sampras clung to the net cord for support, waiting to shake the hand of the opponent who had brought him so low. His quarter-final victory, by 7-6, 5-7, 5-7, 6-4, 7-6, gives both men a page in history.

the fourth set. Sampras found a window. A half-volley drop shot, played by instinct under pressure and falling dead just over the net, and a cross-court volley gave him a service break for a 2-1 lead. He dug to that opening and levelled the match.

Yet as they entered the final set, their faces a kaleidoscope of perspiration beads, it was Corretja who held the advantage of the service-game lead: 1-0, 2-1, 3-2. As he inched towards improbable triumph, Sampras grimly hung on in his wake. In the sixth game, Sampras stretched to two deuces. Trailing 4-5 and serving to save the match, Sampras first took a medical

break in the locker-room, returning in changed clothes, swallowing empty with the gaunt look of a troubled passenger on a bumpy flight in heavy turbulence.

He held his serve with an ace on game point for 5-3. Corretja confidently served to love to lead 6-5. The match timer stood at 3hr 52min. Sampras's head, which is always cast down between points, was lower than ever. He, too, served to love and lifted his eyes skywards as if in supplication.

The fifth set tie-break, which operates in the US Open, is the ultimate in ball-game Russian roulette. Sampras breaks serve for 1-0, but is then passed on his serve for 1-1. He stoops, clutches his chest and is sick, though his stomach is empty.

As he gropes towards serving the next point, the umpire, bizarrely, gives him a time warning for delay. With one more break point each, they are level at 3-3. Sampras serves an ace to lead 4-3, hits a long backhand to give Corretja 4-4. Struggling to reach a forehand pass, Corretja falls on the baseline to trail 5-4, but then hits a winning forehand pass for 5-5.

A smash brings Sampras match point but he nets a forehand for 6-6, then loses a rally to go match point down. The crowd of nearly 20,000 holds itself, bewitched as Corretja serves for the kill. Sampras returns, Corretja hits a cross-court forehand, and somehow, lunging like a man grasping at the handle of a runaway car, Sampras stretches across and blindly hits a winning volley. In the heavy night air, the crowd gasps, exhaling a thousand emotions.

Sampras gathers himself once more in nausea and his first service gives him an 8-7 lead. The cruelest of blows befalls Corretja as he double faults. "It was the best match of my career," he would say, "and the worst."



Dibnah, the leader overnight, plays out of a bunker during her second round of 70. Photograph: Ian Stewart

Brilliant Davies sweeps into lead

By MEL WEBB

AWAY from work, Laura Davies gives every indication of being a normal human being with, no doubt, her share of human failings. Put her on a golf course, however, and the human becomes superhuman, and she gave further proof of it yesterday when she produced a round at Hanbury Manor that contained more high spots than other players produce in a season.

A 63 it was, the lowest round of the Marks and Spencer European Open by three shots, and it put her into a three-stroke lead on 133, eleven under par. Corinne Dibnah, her closest rival, had a 70, Stephan Dallongeville follows on seven under par and Trish Johnson and Dale Reid, the other two Solheim Cup players in the field, are handily placed on four under. Davies was characteristically low-key about a perfor-

mance that would have had most of her opponents dancing in the aisles, but, modest though she tried to remain, she could not prevent a small note of justified satisfaction from creeping in.

"Yes, I played nicely," she said in the mother of all understatement. "But this course is open enough for me to use my driver pretty often, and if that's going well, I'm likely to get close enough to give myself a chance a lot of the time."

One of the clues to Davies's greatness is her length off the tee, and she alone in this field has the ability to overpower the golf course. For instance, she drove the green at the 1st, a par four of 310 yards, and had it not been for a small misread with her putter, she would have got off the mark with an eagle two. As it was, a birdie was a formality.

She continued on her serene way throughout the rest of the front nine, picking up shots at the 2nd and 7th, but saved the real incendiary snuff for the closing stretch. After a birdie from two feet at the 11th, she birdied the last five holes with a compelling combination of power and subtlety. Four times in that sequence, booming drives left her within easy sand-wedge distance, and at the other, the 144 yard 16th, she chipped in from 15 feet.

Torrance gives best impression

FROM PATRICIA DAVIES IN GRANS-SUR-SIERRE

SAM TORRANCE, trying his damndest to impress Severiano Ballesteros, his playing partner and the European Ryder Cup captain, did just that as he surged to the head of affairs with a second round of 63, eight under par, in the Canon European Masters here yesterday.

On a glorious, chocolate-box day of blue skies and little breeze, the Scotsman, clad in sombre grey, left the opposition gasping in the Alpine air. "That's the best I have ever seen you play," Ballesteros told him, not once but twice, and on one came close to the Torrance total of 128, 14 under par. A lesson from his father and a change of long putter-back to an old faithful borrowed from Vijay Singh - had worked wonders.

Paul Broadhurst was a distant second, six shots behind, with his fellow Englishman, Lee Westwood, and Olle Nordberg, of Sweden, third on 135, seven under. Miles Tunnicliffe, an Englishman based in Spain, would have matched Torrance's 63 but for dropping a shot at the last. He was in the group on 136, alongside Colin Montgomerie, who had seven birdies in an eventual level-par round of 71 that also included three bogeys and two double bogeys.

RUGBY LEAGUE

Wigan can foil rivals' treble hopes

By CHRISTOPHER IRVINE

WHEN they embarked on two seasons rolled into one 13 months ago, Wigan were in their pomp and St Helens in their shadow. But, as the virtually seamless winter and summer campaigns draw to a close with the St Helens Premiership final at Old Trafford tomorrow, the "nearly team" are on the verge of an improbable treble.

A St Helens v Wigan final is an appropriate conclusion to a non-stop year. No other team has had a look-in: Wigan polished off the centenary championship and Regal Trophy in winter; St Helens blossomed in summer and claimed the Challenge Cup and the Super League.

For St Helens, the fear is that success may have gone to their heads, leaving them taking the necessary edge. They were worthy winners of the Super League, but this one-off scenario favours Wigan. Whatever, it is a mouth-watering prospect to pack supporters off for a first winter without professional rugby league in 101 years.

Apollo Perellini, the Western Samoan, has been the outstanding St Helens forward and much will depend on him. Chris Joynt, who needs a cartilage operation, is not being risked, so the Australian, Derek McVey, comes into the second row.

Wigan retain the line-up from the memorable semi-final defeat of Bradford. Both sides bristle with attacking flair, but the key probably lies in defence. Kris Radlinski, the Wigan full back and Steve Prescott, his opposite number, will be two of the most exciting talents to tour New Zealand with Great Britain in autumn, but their coolness under the high ball and cover-tackling abilities will be fully tested here.

RUGBY UNION: RUGBY LEAGUE PLAYERS READY TO MAKE THEIR BOW

RFU agrees to joint approach

By DAVID HANDS RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

THE home rugby unions may have breathed a sigh of relief after the resolution of the five nations' championship dispute on Thursday, but questions remain to be asked about how the game in Britain came to such a pass that a tournament regarded as the crown jewels of the northern hemisphere could be threatened with disbandment.

It now appears that the Rugby Football Union (RFU) representatives acknowledged the principle of joint negotiation over the five nations' broadcasting rights for the next ten years. Insiders insist that this principle, rather than money, was always central to the dispute that had seen England threatened with expulsion.

It was not until representatives of the Celtic unions had met Sam Chisholm, chief executive of BSkyB, the satellite television company part-owned by News International, and whose agreement with the RFU sparked the argument,

that they became convinced that England had no retreat from the agreement. In the light of that meeting, and with considerable input from France, they drew up a discussion paper that proved the foundation for Thursday's settlement.

Within rugby circles, changes to the RFU negotiating team are also regarded as a significant contributing factor to the deadlock being broken: happily that credit reflects equally on representatives of the two factions within the RFU committee who have been at odds all year. It may also have taught them a severe lesson: there is little prospect of triumphalism when details of the accord are announced on Monday.

"We are delighted that the integrity of the five nations' tournament - one of the great institutions of rugby football - is preserved and that the five unions will be able to work together to settle the remaining disputes within the game," Vernon Hugh, the chairman of the Welsh Rugby Union (WRU), said yesterday. At least the pressure on the

RFU has relaxed and may help them to negotiate a further accord with their leading clubs. "Bridges have been built on one front but I hope the construction work can be achieved over the internal dispute," Jack Rowell, the England coach, said. He intends to name another training squad next week and hopes that, unlike last Wednesday, the players will turn up.

The Welsh union, having ratified (like England) the five nations' accord, has confirmed its intention of governing in the interests of all its members, and will stress that point in individual replies to the 12 clubs who make up First Division Rugby Ltd. The Welsh clubs are by no means as solid in their ambition to break away from the WRU as their English counterparts who, should they choose to go on October 11 as they say they will, could be isolated. They must carry with them the Welsh and the French, but leaders of French clubs will not contemplate playing in an unauthorised club competition.

ATHLETICS: PLEA TO COMPETE IN UNPAID 'PEACE' MEETING FINDS MIXED RECEPTION

Leading runners lacking in solidarity

FROM DAVID POWELL ATHLETICS CORRESPONDENT IN MILAN

IN A show of solidarity that will surprise nobody, the world's leading athletes are here en masse for the money-spinning International Amateur Athletic Federation Grand Prix final today, a chance to share in \$3.4 million (about £2.2 million), the biggest prize fund in the sport's history. In a show of division that will also surprise nobody, not all will move on to the Solidarity meeting in Sarajevo on Monday, for which athletes have been asked to give their services free.

"I expect 80 per cent of the athletes who have been invited to go to Sarajevo," Primo

city since peace was re-established last November. Given that it was looking unlikely yesterday that Michael Johnson would attend, that Jonathan Edwards had offered apologies for absence, and that Dennis Mitchell had spoken up for several Americans who were refusing to go, Nebiolo's estimate appeared optimistic.

"To promote the humanitarian aspect of this event, and the virtue of promoting peace in Bosnia, we are asking all athletes to forego any appearance fees or prize-moneys which would normally be considered," Nebiolo said in a letter to athletes. The Solidarity meeting has been common knowledge in athletics circles since the beginning of the

decline, offering instead to put on coaching clinics in Sarajevo at a later date.

Johnson was thinking much along the lines as Mitchell, the grand prix leader in the 100 metres. "Track and field is my life but it is not worth my life," Mitchell said yesterday. "I would like to go to Sarajevo, and run there, but I do not think it is safe enough."

Brad Hunt, Johnson's manager, said that the Olympic 200 metres and 400 metres champion was still undecided. "Michael has been told by the US State Department there is an anti-American sentiment," Hunt said. However, the IAAF has received written indications from the US embassy in Sarajevo, and from NATO,

tary of the local organising committee, as having "more importance for every citizen in our country" than even the staging of the 1994 winter Olympic Games here.

Though it is doubtful that Nebiolo will achieve his 80 per cent, he will not do badly. He has assurances from Nour-eddine Morceli, Daniel Komen and Svetlana Masterkova among others, although whether they are attending for nothing is questionable.

Also raising eyebrows is Johnson's appearance here. Having run only two grand prix races at 400 metres, he stands ninth in the points table, with the first eight qualifying for the final. Conveniently for Johnson and the IAAF, which needs its athletes

Blanket security limiting Australian opportunities

YOU will recall that the Australia cricket team forfeited their matches in Sri Lanka during the World Cup earlier this year by refusing to go to Colombo to play them. They had whinged about security not being tight enough for such living National Treasures in the wake of the Colombo bombing. They were accused of being insular, pandering to terrorists and being just plain yellow, but they still stayed away, sulking.

But now Australia are in Sri Lanka for a four-nation tournament. And guess what? They are whinging again. And guess what about? Security. Yes, security is too tight. The local Times newspaper said: "The Australian captain [Ian Healy, in Mark Taylor's absence] had told a senior cricket board official that security at the hotel was too tight and the cricketers were deprived of out-of-the-playfield opportunities." Poor loves.

Taylor and Shane Warne were the most outspoken whingers during the World Cup, and both have, alas, succumbed to injuries that prevented them from taking part this time. Talk about coincidence. One banner at the cricket read: "Taylor hospitalised for badly needed back-bone." Meanwhile, the Sri Lanka captain, Arjuna Ranatunga, said: "We have an excellent rapport with India or anybody else. We can't say the same about the Australians."

Letting rip

Meanwhile, Australians are stoking things up in the war of words before their Test series



On Saturday

against Pakistan, inflamed by the Pakistan captain, Wasim Akram, who said that his own leg spinner, Mushtaq Ahmed, was better than Warne. Healy replied with this trenchant analysis: "Mushtaq's got a well-disguised wrong-un, he's got a flipper and a little rusher or skidder. But he doesn't rip the leggie like Warne does."

Scotch mist

And now for news of the next Test-playing nation - Scotland, who else? And who says so? None other than Ali Bacher, chairman of the International Cricket Council development committee. "Test cricket is definitely a possibility in ten to 15 years," he said. I wonder if Mr Bacher took the opportunity to sample that nice wine they make in Scotland; you know, the pale gold stuff with names that begin with Glen.

Flying nun

Sister Pierangela, a football-playing nun, has been transferred from the village of Montiaione, to Carpi. No official reason for the move has been given, and the people of Montiaione have petitioned the Bishop of Volterra for her return, but in vain. Sister Pierangela has a degree in psychology, plays the guitar, and occasionally dresses up as

EQUESTRIANISM

Davidson dazzles in majestic company

By JENNY MACARTHUR

BRUCE DAVIDSON, of the United States, who won the first of his two world titles at Burghley in 1974, moved into the lead with Mary King, on Star Appeal, at the end of the dressage phase of the Burghley Horse Trials, sponsored by Pedigree Chum, in Lincolnshire yesterday.

Riding George Strawbridge's ten-year-old thoroughbred, Squelch, Davidson produced a flowing, accurate test that was rewarded with deservedly high marks by all three judges. His performance was a measure of consolation for Davidson, who earlier in the day had to withdraw his 1995 Badminton winner, Eagle Lion, because of an injured hind leg.

William Fox-Pitt, of Britain, on Loch Alan, and Terry Boon, a former European young rider's champion, on Vital Decision, were the only other riders to achieve a score in the 40s yesterday. Boon would have led had the excitable gelding not made two errors in an otherwise outstanding test.

The pecking order is likely to be changed again today when riders tackle Mark Phillips's 33-fence cross-country course, which is bigger and more technical than in previous years. Though this could be a disadvantage for those in their first four-star event - such as Davidson, Pippa Funnell, on Bits and Pieces, and Fox-Pitt - it should benefit the more experienced partnerships.

Chief among these are Mark Todd, of New Zealand, on Bertie Blunt, who intends to take the direct route in order to improve his ninth place. The 32-year-old gelding, on which Todd won Badminton in May, lost valuable marks when he took time to settle yesterday.

In contrast, Andrew Nicholson produced his best test on his second ride, Cartoon, and is lying eighth. But taken for granted across country. "He always hits at least one fence very hard," Nicholson said.

Scores, page 51 Results, page 51

Mums go to law

As the American women gymnasts team cavort on the packet of the breakfast of champions, so the legal systems braces itself for an assault by bitter gymnastic parents. Three mothers are suing the Gymnastada Gymnastics School in Virginia. The school is accused of forcing their daughters to perform while injured, of emotional abuse, and for refusing the allow them to go to the lavatory. Cheryl Davis, mother of Andrea, 13, said: "It is clear-cut abuse, the mental and emotional games they played with these kids." A fair point - but did anyone ever say sport was supposed to be easy?

Smoke signals

Power-boosters: Andrew Perry is the first reader of this space to receive a bottle of ambrosial Nicolas Feuillatte champagne and Le Bric for his horse or guinea-pig. He tells me of a rugby tour to Florida, and the pre-match ritual. "Our opponents gathered in a small, fairly intimate circle from which a large cloud of smoke soon appeared. This got heavier and thicker as kick-off time approached. One of the opposition officials then invited us to join them. On going across to the group, I saw the biggest joint I had ever seen being passed round to all the players." The match began: the opposition "had loads of energy, tackled like demons, and seemed impervious to pain." However, Mr Perry's side won, which he is inclined to put down to the fact that no further joint appeared at half-time. This column is confound

THE TIMES GUIDE TO THE PREMIERSHIP THIS WEEKEND

ARSENAL
Next Tuesday, in the Uefa Cup, Arsenal host Borussia Mönchengladbach in deep crisis. Stefan Effenberg, their recalcitrant midfielder player, has demanded a huge bonus on top of his £1 million contract.

ASTON VILLA
Read all about it! Brian Little's innermost thoughts laid bare in new kiss-and-tell tome, entitled Return Of The Little Villan.

BLACKBURN ROVERS
Desperate times call for desperate measures, and Ray Harford has resorted to something extremely desperate indeed... a smile.

CHELSEA
Sheffield Wednesday, Chelsea's opponents tomorrow, have full points but may have been living above their means.

COVENTRY CITY
Coventry's relationship with referees appears to be at rock bottom, similar to their position in the Premiership.

DERBY COUNTY
Four down, one to go. That is the way the manager, Jim Smith, is looking at a fixture list that could hardly have dealt Derby a more testing first five games on their arrival in the FA Premiership.

EVERTON
These are interesting days for John Ebbrell. Two weeks ago, in the absence of Dave Watson, Joe Royle made him captain instead of David Unsworth.

LEEDS UNITED
Howard Wilkinson's search for new players is catholic to say the least, ranging from Interazionale to Oldham. He is having more luck at Oldham.

LEICESTER CITY
Martin O'Neill, the Leicester manager, and John Robertson, his assistant, started on opposite flanks during the most successful period of Nottingham Forest's history through the late Seventies.

LIVERPOOL
Liverpool welcome Graeme Souness back today, but there is no sentiment at Anfield for the former manager.

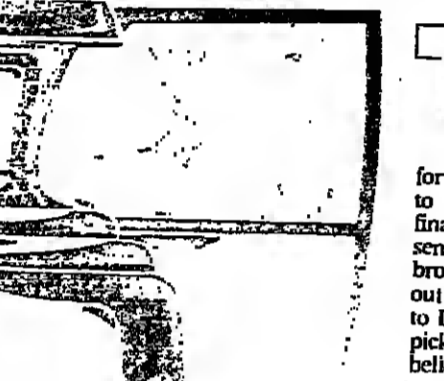
MANCHESTER UNITED
Visits to Leeds have always figured high in Manchester United's demonology - "15,000 horrible skinheads in their end yelling murder at you."

MIDDLESBROUGH
The giant oil tanker North Sea Producer is still anchored in the Tees by Riverside Stadium. It has spent the summer undergoing a refit - rather like Middlesbrough.

NEWCASTLE UNITED
A significant win on Wednesday has got Kevin Keegan playing the nice guy again. Having found a target for his frustration at a sloppy start - the media, naturally - his mood has lightened.

NOTTINGHAM FOREST
The appearance of Fabrizio Ravanelli at the head of the FA Carling Premiership's scoring list is hardly surprising.

SOUTHAMPTON
After encountering one of his former players, Dean Saunders, on Wednesday, Graeme Souness today returns to Anfield - not the easiest place to get a first away point - to face a whole team of them.



SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY
Things are getting fruity down at Hillsborough, and David Peat believes it illustrates the secret of his success. The transformation, he says, from relegation fodder to table-toppers is because the team is finally doing what he says.

HOW THEY STAND
Table with columns: Rank, Team, P, Pts, Diff, Last five lge games.

TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR
Allan Nielsen, the Denmark midfielder player, made a promising first appearance for Tottenham amid the flying limbs of Selhurst Park on Wednesday.

WEST HAM UNITED
There are worrying signs of unrest in the ranks of Harry Redknapp's foreign legion. Mauling in Middlesbrough in midweek, West Ham return to the North East to play Sunderland tomorrow.

SUNDERLAND
Peter Reid's side entertain Harry Redknapp's Londoners at Roker Park tomorrow, knowing that they hardly allowed Alan Shearer and Les Ferdinand a kick for the first 45 minutes of the 2-1 defeat by Newcastle on Wednesday.

WIMBLEDON
The continued omission of three players following alleged training ground ructions with manager Joe Kinnear has led to a written transfer request from one of them, Dean Holdsworth.

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ASTON VILLA v ARSENAL
TICKETS: Sold out
10-YEAR RECORD: 0-4, -0-3, 2-1, 0-0, 3-1, 1-0, 1-2, 0-4, 1-1.

LEEDS UNITED v MANCHESTER UNITED
TICKETS: Seats available
10-YEAR RECORD: -0-0, 1-1, 0-0, 0-2, 2-1, 3-1.

LIVERPOOL v SOUTHAMPTON
TICKETS: Sold out
10-YEAR RECORD: 1-0, 1-1, 2-0, 3-2, 0-0, 1-1, 4-2, 3-1, 1-1.

MIDDLESBROUGH v COVENTRY CITY
TICKETS: Seats available
10-YEAR RECORD: -0-0, 1-1, -0-0, 0-2, -0-2, -0-2, -0-2.

NOTTINGHAM FOREST v LEICESTER CITY
TICKETS: Seats available
10-YEAR RECORD: 2-1, -1-1, -0-0, 1-0, -0-0.

SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY v CHELSEA
TICKETS: Seats available
10-YEAR RECORD: 2-0, 3-0, -1-1, -0-0, 3-3, 3-1, 1-1, 0-0.

TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR v NEWCASTLE UNITED
TICKETS: Sold out
10-YEAR RECORD: 1-1, 3-1, 2-0, -0-0, -0-0, 1-2, 4-2, 1-1.

WIMBLEDON v EVERTON
TICKETS: Seats available
10-YEAR RECORD: 1-2, 1-1, 2-1, 3-1, 2-1, 0-0, 1-3, 1-1, 2-1, 2-3.

SUNDERLAND v WEST HAM UNITED
TICKETS: Seats available
10-YEAR RECORD: -0-0, 4-3, -0-0, -0-0.

BLACKBURN ROVERS v DERBY COUNTY
TICKETS: Seats available
10-YEAR RECORD: 3-1, -0-0, -0-0, -0-0, -0-0, 2-0.

WHEN TO WATCH ON TELEVISION
10.15pm BBC 1 Match of the Day (Highlights)
11.00am Sky Sports Goals on Sunday
4pm Sky Sports Ford Escort Super Sunday Sunderland v West Ham

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CRICKET 48

Derbyshire title chase frustrated by Kerr's innings

LANCASHIRE return to their second home of Lord's today, bringing vast experience, noisy support and the uncomfortable feeling that some will judge their season a failure...

not finished in the top three since 1986 and this summer they will be closer to last than first. Tolerance is running thin: the coach, John Stanworth, has already been told that he will be demoted next year and Mike Watkinson may find himself replaced as captain.

NatWest quarter-final at Headingley last August. Such is their familiarity with the requirements of limited-overs cricket that they seem able to rise routinely above their championship toils to perform on the showpiece days.

cricket. Is there another sport that could countenance such a preface to what is allegedly the glamour cup final of the season? Essex must also cope without the inspiration of Stuart Law. The notion that Law might return from Sri Lanka to play was finally quashed yesterday when Australia reached the final of the Singer Cup. He is still expected back next week, for the two remaining championship fixtures...

stance. Steve Elworthy, the South African, was so devastated at being left out for the Benson and Hedges final that he walked out of Lord's to calm down: he may be more philosophical today. No foreigners, however, should not be mistaken for no personalities. This final is full of them. Lancashire offer a team chock-full of internationalists and a spirit typified by the energy of Warren Hegg and the admirable, metronomic bowling of the round Ian Austin. Both might have played one-day cricket for England by now and Hegg, the wicketkeeper, may tour Australia with the A team this winter.

Lord's, though provisionally he has decided to play on for one more year, and he will recall with pleasure and sentiment marching out to open the batting there in 1979, when Essex first reached a final and ended 103 years without an honour. Gooch made a century that day; Essex need something similar from him today if they are to win. Perhaps nobody will want to win more than Ronnie Irani, who began his career with Lancashire but found his opportunities so limited that he uprooted and moved south. Essex have embraced his vigour and enthusiasm, developed his all-round talent, given him a stage to become a star. This just might be his occasion.

As ever, though, the whole thing will depend far too much on the toss of the coin, for the last ten NatWest finals have been won by the side batting second. September dew, and a 10.30am start, is too great a factor and when the Test and County Cricket Board discusses the domestic structure this winter, it will surely conclude that this final, with its elongated format and its three intervals, is an anachronism. If Essex do lose the toss this morning, they have a memory to cling onto. The last final to be won by a team batting first was in 1985 - Essex's only previous NatWest appearance. They beat Nottinghamshire by one run that day, the decisive, last-ball catch being taken by the man who will ignore a back injury to lead them today, Paul Prichard.

Space-age Lord's, page 1 Derbyshire denied, page 38

SPORT

GOLF 49

Davies sweeps into first-round lead with brilliant 63



SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 7 1996

Lancashire looking for double indemnity

By ALAN LEE CRICKET CORRESPONDENT

LORD'S DETAILS

- LANCASHIRE (probable) M.A. Atherton, J.E.R. Gallian, P. Crawley, W.H. Foster-Carter, G.O. Lloyd, M. Watkinson (captain), W.K. Hogg (wk), I.O. Austin, G. Cheape, S. Yemm, P.J. Moran

- ESSEX (probable) G.A. Gooch, A.P. Grayson, N. Hussain, P. Procter (captain), O.J. Robinson, R.C. Ford, R.J. Fothergill (wk), M.C. Bot, N.P. Williams, P. Cowie, P.M. Such

Umpires: O.R. Shepherd and P. Willey. TV: A.A. Jones. TV: BBC1: Grandstand 10.20-12.45. BBC2: 1.20-8.00

Briton fired up to secure title

Benetton put Hill top of the wanted list

FROM OLIVER HOLT IN MONZA

THE tension had gone, the creases in his face were smoothed away. The furrow about the sacking of Damon Hill by the Williams team is rumbling on but instead of derailing his efforts to clinch his first world drivers' title here this weekend, the Englishman stood and watched as the reverberations of his dismissal spread chaos through the paddock like the after-shocks of an earthquake.

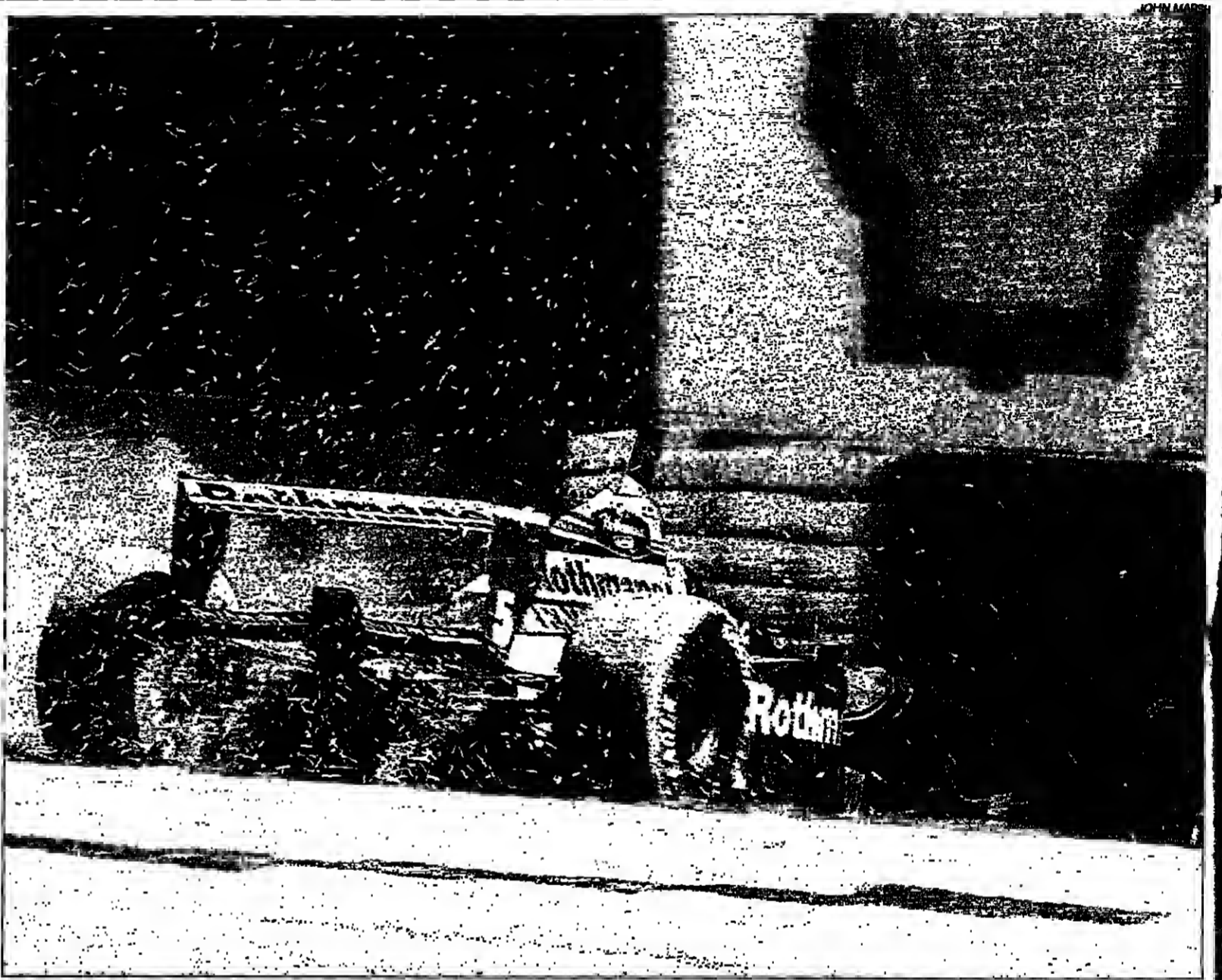
is business as usual. Am I going to win on Sunday? You bet. His self-assurance stemmed not only from his belief that he kept enough in reserve yesterday to challenge strongly for pole position today, but also from the perception swirling around the paddock that most of Formula One's long and winding roads are leading to him at the moment. Benetton, in particular, are thought to be coming under intense pressure to offer him a drive next season. They have two drivers, Jean Alesi and Gerhard Berger, in the midst of two-year contracts. But Alesi, conveniently, is showing

signs of succumbing to a familiar pattern of self-destruction just at the right moment. The Frenchman spun wildly yesterday and then indulged in a bout of stinging criticism of his team. "I want to be a racing driver, not a taxi driver," Alesi said. "With this car, I lose the possibility of showing what I can do. The car has a lot of problems. My aim at the beginning of the season was totally different from what has happened. I am here competing at the end of the world championship for a lowly place in the final classification. I started with big ambitions, but I will again have to wait until the next season." The response of Flavio Briatore, the Benetton managing director, was short and to the point. "It is best to see Berger's time and shut up," he said. Although Alesi denied any move was planned, Briatore inched away from his earlier insistence that there would be no change in his lineup, and it now appears probable that Alesi may find himself at Jordan next season, possibly alongside Ralf Schumacher, the younger brother of the world champion.

Hill's insertion at Benetton would ease the concerns of commercial interests such as ITV, which was dismayed at the prospect of Hill's removal from the heat of the battle after it paid £70 million for the rights to screen the sport for five years from next season, and please Bernie Ecclestone, the sport's ringmaster, who is

keen to see Hill continue his duel with Michael Schumacher. It would also pacify Renault, engine suppliers to both Williams and Benetton, who wish to complete their final season in Formula One next year with the coveted No 1 on one of their cars would then be granted if Hill is world champion. At Ferrari, too, even though Jean Todt, the team's sporting director, ruled out the prospect of Hill joining the world champion next season, the repercussions of the Englishman's replacement by Heinz-Harald Frentzen were felt yesterday. Schumacher shared a press conference platform with Frentzen and admitted coyly that he fears his compatriot in a Williams more than he has ever feared Hill. "We always say: 'How good is Damon?'" Schumacher said. "I think by changing to another team, we are going to see. Perhaps we will see how good his abilities are." Most ironically, though, it seems their treatment of Hill

may also rebound on Williams. Adrian Newey, their brilliant chief designer and the man responsible for much of their recent success, is a friend of Hill and was disillusioned by his sacking. He is under contract with Williams until 1999, but it is believed that get-out clauses in his deal could have been triggered by his unhappiness over the fate of the Englishman, and it is possible he may now be free to join McLaren, who have been courting him assiduously, next year.



Hill ploughs through the gravel after spinning off the track during practice for the Italian Grand Prix at Monza yesterday

MONZA DETAILS

PRACTICE TIMES: 1, M. Schumacher (Ger, Ferrari) 1:24.399sec; 2, M. Hakkinen (Fin, McLaren) 1:24.667; 3, G. Berger (Sui, Benetton) 1:24.959; 4, E. Irvine (GB, Ferrari) 1:24.988; 5, J. Villeneuve (Can, Williams) 1:25.055; 6, J. Alesi (Fr, Benetton) 1:25.335; 7, O. Panis (Fr, Williams) 1:25.602; 8, H.-H. Frentzen (Ger, Sauber) 1:25.973; 9, P. Diniz (Br, Ligier) 1:26.350; 10, J. Herbert (GB, Sauber) 1:26.706; 11, M. Brundage (GB, Jordan) 1:26.751; 12, O. Coulthard (GB, McLaren) 1:26.968; 13, R. Barrichello (Br, Jordan) 1:27.029; 14, O. Panis (Fr, Ligier) 1:27.177; 15, J. Vanthienen (Bel, Footwork) 1:27.667; 16, M. Salo (Fin, Tyrrell) 1:28.125; 17, J. Koyama (Jpn, Tyrrell) 1:28.541; 18, P. Rosset (Fr, Footwork) 1:29.561; 19, P. Lamy (Por, Minardi) 1:28.764; 20, G. Lavaggi (It, Minardi) 1:29.225

CHAMPIONSHIP STANDINGS (after 13 rounds): Drivers: 1, M. Schumacher 98; 2, M. Hakkinen 83; 3, Schumacher 80; 4, Alesi 58; 5, Hakkinen 53; 6, Coulthard 47; Berger 47; 8, Panis 43; 9, Barrichello 42; 10, Irvine 41; 11, Frentzen 36; 12, Salo 35; 13, Herbert 34; 14, Brundage 25; 15, Vanthienen 23; 16, Williams 22; 17, Villeneuve 22; 18, McLaren 21; 19, Jordan 18; 20, Ligier 17; Sauber 16; Tyrrell 9; Footwork 1

REMAINING GRANDS PRIX: Tomorrow: Italian; Monza; Sept 22: Portuguese; Estoril; Oct 13: Japanese; Suzuka

Wilkins returns to help out friend

By RUSSELL KEMPSON

RAY WILKINS is back in football, only 48 hours after leaving Queens Park Rangers by mutual consent. Wilkins, the player-manager at Loftus Road, yesterday joined Wycombe Wanderers as a player and is likely to make his debut in the Nationwide League second division match against Luton Town at Adams Park this afternoon.

"I want to play on as long as I can but that had nothing to do with me leaving," he said. "It was not as it has been portrayed. People can read into that what they want. It wasn't a resignation, either. I have never walked away from anything in my life." Wilkins will talk to other clubs next week. "I've already had a lot of inquiries from old friends and I'll be contacting them all," he said. "I've got a couple of meetings fixed up, with managers of clubs at a higher level than Wycombe, and we'll have to see how they go." Chris Waddle, of Sheffield Wednesday, has emerged as a surprise candidate to replace Wilkins at Rangers, who were relegated from the FA Carling Premiership last season. Waddle, 35, is still keen to move into management despite missing out on the assistant's job to David Pleat at Hillsborough. "We have nobody in mind at the moment," said Chris Wright, the Rangers owner, who added that transfer money would be made available to the new manager.

Unions turn attention to the clubs

THE administrative log-jam that has cast such a blight over the opening of the new rugby union season showed signs of easing yesterday, in the wake of the accord between England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales that has put the five nations' championship back on track (David Hands writes).

Boardman cracks world hour mark

By PETER BRYAN

CHRIS BOARDMAN scaled cycling's Everest last night when he set a world one-hour record by covering 56.38km on Manchester's £9 million indoor track. He beat Tony Rominger's distance of 55.29km set at Bordeaux nearly two years ago. It was Boardman's third world record within eight days; during last week's world track championships he twice broke the world 4,000 metres pursuit record to regain the title he first held in 1994. Boardman had previously held the world hour record for nine months in 1993-94 with 52.70km before Scotland's Graeme Obree improved it by 0.443 km. Miguel Indurain, who failed this year in his attempt to win a sixth consecutive Tour de France - but later won a gold medal in the Olympic road time-trial in Atlanta - was planning to be on holiday with his family this weekend. The holiday is cancelled. Instead his sponsors, Banesto, have ordered him to be on the startline today in Valencia for the 3,900-kilometre Tour of Spain.

Olympics organiser steps aside

JOHN ILIFFE, president of the organising committee for the Olympic Games in Sydney in 2000, has resigned after only six months in the job. Iliffe, who became the second man to quit the post, said that, after visiting the Atlanta Olympics, he had realised that the host government should head the organising committee. "I have resigned as president of the Sydney Organising Committee for the Olympic Games," Iliffe said in a statement yesterday. "That role will be assumed by the Minister for the Olympics, Michael Knight," he said. Knight said that he had spoken to Juan Antonio Samaranch, the president of the International Olympic Committee, in Atlanta and that Samaranch was in favour of stronger Government involvement in the 2000 Games. "He was wholeheartedly in support of it," Knight said at a press conference. Samaranch failed to endorse the troubled Atlanta Games as the best Olympics ever, as he usually does, preferring to describe the Games as "most exceptional".

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